

Compendium

Focus on violent crime and sexual offences, England and Wales: year ending Mar 2016

Analyses on violent crime and sexual offences from the year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales and crimes recorded by police.

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Release date:
9 February 2017

Next release:
To be announced

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Overview of violent crime and sexual offences

This overview covers statistics on violent and sexual offences recorded by the police in the year ending March 2016 and violent crimes estimated by the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) in the same year.

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1 . Main points

The estimated annual number of CSEW violent crime incidents has fallen from its 1995 peak of 3.8 million to 1.3 million. However, there was no statistically significant change compared with the previous year's survey.

Improvements in crime recording processes by the police are thought to be the main driver of a 27% rise in the number of violence against the person offences recorded by the police in the year ending March 2016 compared with the previous year.

The 106,098 sexual offences recorded by the police was the highest figure recorded since the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard in 2002. As well as improvements in recording practices, this is thought to reflect a greater willingness of victims to come forward to report such crimes, including non-recent victims.

Violence without injury accounted for around half (55%) of all CSEW violent incidents, while the more serious crimes of wounding and assault with minor injury accounted for 24% and 21% respectively.

Victimisation rates have declined over time, with 1.8% of adults aged 16 and over being a victim of violent crime in the 12 months prior to interview, compared with 4.8% of adults when CSEW violent crime was at its peak in 1995.

Around half of CSEW violent incidents (52%) were reported to the police. This was higher than the proportion of all CSEW incidents reported to the police (42%), and represents a 10 percentage point increase since the year ending March 2012 survey.

2 . Things you need to know about this release

Violent crime covers a wide range of offences including minor assaults (such as pushing and shoving), harassment and abuse (that result in no physical harm) through to wounding and homicide. Sexual offences include rape, sexual assault and unlawful sexual activity against adults and children, sexual grooming and indecent exposure.

CSEW violent crime

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) is a face-to-face victimisation survey in which people resident in households in England and Wales are asked about their experiences of a selected range of offences in the 12 months prior to the interview. The CSEW covers crimes against the population of England and Wales resident in households, and crimes against those households. The primary purpose of the CSEW is to provide national level estimates but some headline figures are available at regional level.

Violent crime statistics from the CSEW are presented under the overall category of "Violence", and refer primarily to the offences of wounding, assault with minor injury, and violence without injury. There are additional breakdowns for the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator (domestic, acquaintance, and stranger). As with police recorded crime, both actual and attempted assaults are included in CSEW figures. All changes reported in this chapter are statistically significant unless stated otherwise.

The CSEW does not cover homicide as it is based on the responses of victims. The CSEW also does not include sexual offences in its main estimates due to the low levels of reporting of these offences in the face-to-face interviews. However, the survey does contain a separate self-completion module which asks respondents, aged 16 to 59, about their experience of intimate violence, including sexual offences (see the 'Domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking' chapter of this release). We are currently testing the feasibility of raising this age limit with changes possibly being introduced from April 2017.

The CSEW also does not cover the population living in group residences or other institutions (for example, care homes or halls of residence), nor does it cover the population not resident in households (for example, tourists or visitors), or crimes against the commercial or business sector.

The CSEW was extended in 2009 to cover children aged 10 to 15, and, where appropriate, data for this age group are presented in this Overview chapter. Methodological differences between the adult and children's surveys mean that direct comparisons cannot be made between the adult and child victimisation data ¹.

Following criticism of the methodology for handling high-frequency repeat victimisation in CSEW estimates, particularly with regard to violent crime, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) commissioned an independent review of the current and alternative methods for handling high frequency repeat victimisation. This [review](#) was published in July 2016 alongside a user consultation seeking feedback on the review's recommendations, which ran until September 2016.

In response, our [proposed way forward](#) was published in November 2016, along with a summary of the feedback received to the consultation, with plans to implement a new methodology and revise the back series by July 2018 at the latest. The methodology will be changed going forward so that the experiences of repeat victims are better reflected in the CSEW estimates. The current cap of 5 will be changed to a lighter cap derived by applying the 98th percentile of victim incident counts for each crime type (calculated over a number of years). The proposed change to the methodology will not impact the estimated number of victims and repeat victims, but it will impact the number of incidents of crime, which will be revised upwards across the whole time series. The methodology is not expected to change the existing picture of trends over time.

Police recorded violent crime

The coverage of police recorded crime is defined by the Notifiable Offence List ², which includes a broad range of violent offences, ranging from threats to kill, harassment, and assault without injury, to offences such as homicide ³.

Police recorded crime figures are supplied to ONS (via the Home Office) by the 43 territorial police forces of England and Wales, plus the British Transport Police. As with the CSEW, both actual and attempted assaults are included in the figures. Police recorded crime figures for the year ending March 2016 quoted in this report are those published in January 2017, which were the most up-to-date available at the time this report was published ⁴.

Police recorded crime is the principal source of subnational crime statistics and for higher harm, but lower volume, crimes that are not well-measured by a sample survey. However, police recorded crime figures are restricted to the crimes that have been reported to, and recorded by, the police. Therefore, while the police recorded crime series covers a wider population and a broader set of offences than the CSEW (for example, residents of institutions, tourists and crimes against commercial bodies), it does not include crimes that do not come to the attention of the police or are not recorded by them.

In accordance with the [Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007](#), police recorded crime data have been assessed against the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#) and found not to meet the required standard for designation as [National Statistics](#) ⁵. However, the National Statistics status of statistics about unlawful deaths based on the [Homicide Index](#) ⁶ was restored in December 2016. Data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) continue to be badged as National Statistics.

Changes in police recorded crime need to be considered in the context of the renewed focus on the quality of crime recording by the police, in light of the inspections of forces by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), the [Public Administration Select Committee \(PASC\) inquiry](#) into crime statistics and the UK [Statistics Authority's decision](#) to remove the National Statistics designation from police recorded crime statistics.

The [final report](#) on findings from the HMIC inspections was published in November 2014⁷. HMIC concluded that, across England and Wales, an estimated 1 in 5 offences (19%) that should have been recorded as crimes were not. The greatest levels of under-recording were seen for violence against the person and sexual offences. An estimated 1 in 3 (33%) violent offences and 1 in 4 (26%) sexual offences that should have been recorded as crimes were not.

The renewed focus on the quality of crime recording by the police is thought to have led to improved compliance with the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS), leading to a greater proportion of reported crimes being recorded by the police. This means caution should be taken when interpreting police recorded crime trends. For more information see the 'Quality and methodology' section in [Crime in England and Wales, year ending March 2016](#).

In addition to data on the number of offences recorded by the police, more detailed information about crimes recorded by the police has started to become available from the record-level data collected via the Home Office Data Hub. Such details include characteristics of victims and associated aggravating factors of crimes, and allow for a wider range of analyses to be carried out than is possible through the standard police data returns. See 'Experimental statistics: Data on police recorded violent crime and sexual offences' for more information.

Which is the better source?

Together, the CSEW and police recorded crime provide a fuller picture of violent crime than either series on its own; however, neither should be viewed in isolation. While police recorded crime covers a wider range of offences than the CSEW, it is restricted to the subset of crimes that have been reported to and recorded by the police, and is affected by changes in recording practices and police activity. Therefore while it provides good information about the demands on police and police activity related to violent crime and sexual offences, it can't provide a full count of such crime.

In contrast, although not all victim-based crimes are covered by the CSEW, the prevalence of those violent crimes it does cover is well measured as offences which are not reported to the police are included and a consistent methodology is used that is not subject to changes in recording practices and police activity. The methodology employed in the main count of crime has remained comparable since the survey began in 1981. It was also confirmed in December 2016 that the crime statistics produced by the CSEW retained their National Statistics "badge".

While the CSEW provides a reliable estimate of the trends in prevalence of the violent crimes it covers, it cannot be used to make any inferences about demands on the police for these crimes. The 2 data sources should therefore be considered together to develop a picture of violent crime in England and Wales.

Notes for: Things you need to know about this release

1. See [Experimental statistics on victimisation of children aged 10 to 15](#) for more detail.
2. The Notifiable Offence List includes all indictable and triable-either-way offences (which could be tried at a crown court) and a few additional closely related summary offences (which would be dealt with by a magistrate). For information on the classifications used for notifiable crimes recorded by the police, see Appendix 1 of the [User Guide](#).
3. There are some crimes which are not captured in this bulletin, which may involve some degree of violence but which do not have a specific victim, for example, public order offences. See [Appendix table A4, year ending September 2016](#) for police recorded figures for public order offences.
4. Police recorded crime data is continuously updated. At the time this release was published, the appendix tables published alongside 'Crime in England and Wales: year ending September 2016' provided the most up-to-date data on crime recorded by the police in the year ending March 2016.
5. The full assessment report can be found on the [UK Statistics Authority](#) website.
6. Police forces supply a more detailed statistical return for each homicide (murders, manslaughter and infanticides) recorded in their force area to the Home Office than the main police recorded crime series. These returns are used to populate the Home Office database called the Homicide Index.
7. Separate [Crime data integrity force reports](#) for each of the 43 police forces in England and Wales were published in August 2014.

3 . What is the extent of violent crime?

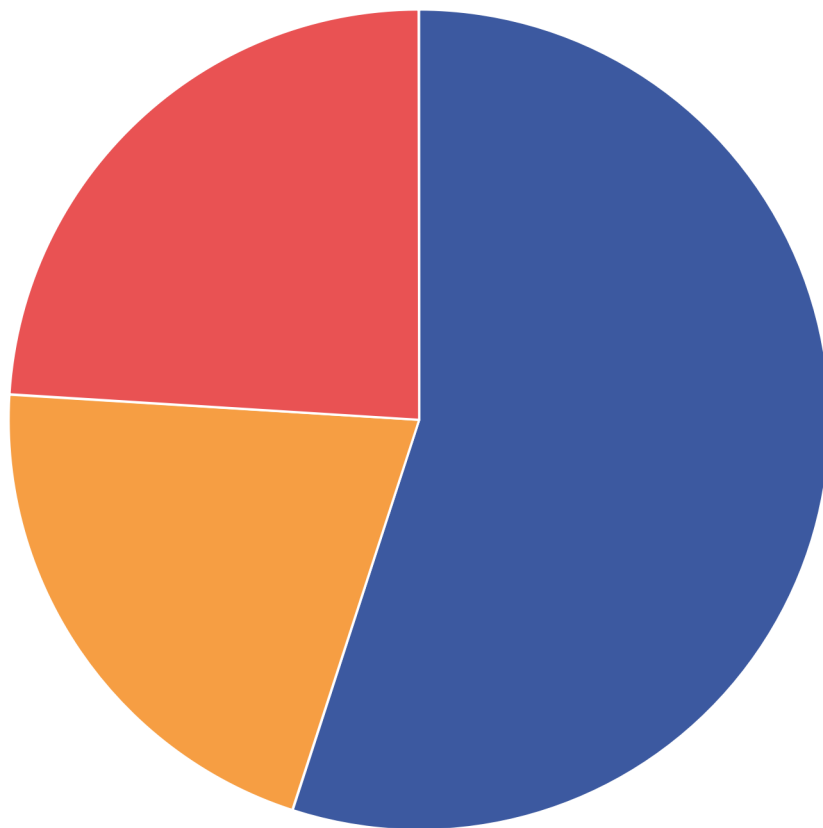
According to the year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), there were 1.3 million incidents of violence experienced by adults in the previous 12 months in England and Wales¹ ([Appendix Table 1, year ending March 2016](#)). This equates to 1.8% of adults aged 16 and over being a victim of violent crime.

Violence without injury (where the victim is punched, kicked, pushed or jostled with no resulting injury) accounted for just over half (55%) of all CSEW violent incidents.

Violence with injury is broken down into 2 types:

- wounding (where the incident results in severe or more serious injury²) – this accounted for 24% of all violent incidents
- assault with minor injury (where the victim is punched, kicked, pushed or jostled with resulting minor injury, such as scratches or bruises) – this accounted for 21% of violent incidents (Figure 1.1)

Figure 1.1: Types of violent crime, year ending March 2016
Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Violent offences in police recorded data are referred to as “violence against the person” and include homicide, violence with injury and violence without injury. There were just under 1 million (992,424) violence against the person offences recorded by the police in the year ending March 2016³. Of these, 57% were classified as violence without injury (equivalent to 560,838 offences) and 43% were classified as violence with injury (431,012 offences), similar to the breakdown shown by the CSEW. Police recording of a crime is based on the element of intent rather than outcome. Therefore incidents classified as violence with injury will include crimes based on the deliberate attempt of the perpetrator to cause serious bodily harm, regardless of whether any injury was sustained by the victim.

Over half of violence without injury offences (61%) recorded by the police in the year ending March 2016 were classified as assaults without injury⁴ (343,212 offences), with the remainder covering a range of offences, including harassment⁵, and threats to kill.

The majority of violence with injury offences (93%) were classified as assaults with injury (402,316 offences). Assaults with intent to cause serious harm accounted for a further 5% of violence with injury offences (23,029 offences).

There were 574 homicides recorded, which accounted for 0.1% of the total violence against the person offences. This differs slightly from the figure reported in the 'Homicide' chapter of this release (571), which uses more accurate data on homicide from the Home Office Homicide Index. Please see the 'Homicide' chapter for more information.

Violent crimes against children

The CSEW estimates the number of crimes against children⁶ aged 10 to 15 resident in households in England and Wales. These data are not directly comparable with the data related to adults⁷. The year ending March 2016 CSEW estimated there were 418,000 violent offences against such children in the previous 12 months. This equates to 5.8% of children aged 10 to 15 being a victim of violent crime, with over half of these (3.2% of children) experiencing assault with minor injury ([Appendix Table 11, year ending March 2016](#)).

The Home Office Data Hub provides some data on child victims of police recorded violent crime (see the 'Experimental Statistics: Data on police recorded violent and sexual offences' chapter of this release).

Notes for: What is the extent of violent crime?

1. 'All violence' includes violence with injury (wounding, assault with minor injury), and violence without injury. For more information see Chapter 5.1 of the [User Guide to Crime Statistics for England and Wales](#).
2. For example, cuts, severe bruising, chipped teeth, bruising or scratches resulting in medical attention or any more serious injury.
3. Recorded crime figures presented in this release are those notified to the Home Office and that were recorded in the Home Office database on 29 November 2016, covering the year ending March 2016 – see [Appendix Table A4](#) for the full data table.
4. Assaults without injury offences are those where at the most a feeling of touch or passing moment of pain is experienced by the victim.
5. Harassment offences are those incidents where no other substantive notifiable offence exists, but when looked at as a course of conduct are likely to cause fear, alarm or distress.
6. These are based on a "preferred measure" that takes into account factors identified as important in determining the severity of an incident such as the relationship of the victim to the perpetrator and the level of injury to the victim. See Chapter 2 of the [User Guide](#) for further information.
7. As noted in Section 2.4 of the Home Office report on [Experimental statistics on victimisation of children aged 10 to 15](#) published in 2010.

4 . Interpreting trends in violent crime

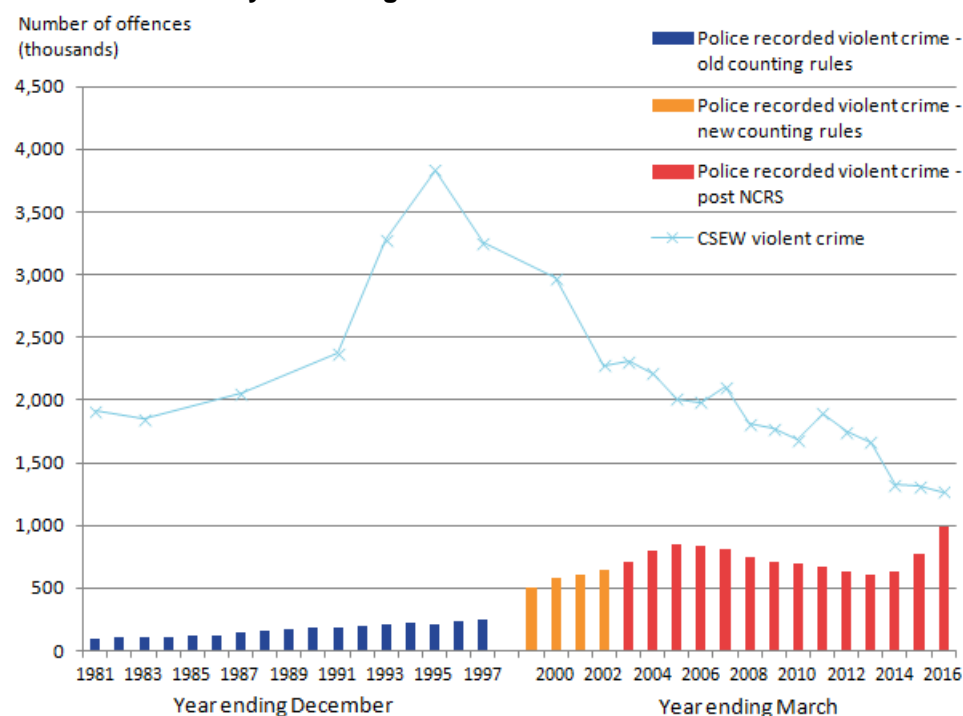
For the population groups and offences it covers, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) is the best source for assessing long-term trends in violent crime as the survey's methodology has remained consistent over time.

The number of incidents of CSEW violence increased through most years of the 1980s before reaching a peak in 1995 (Figure 1.2). Since 1995, the level of violent crime measured by the CSEW has shown a substantial fall (67%). Between the year ending December 1995 and the year ending March 2002 surveys, the estimated annual number of incidents of violent crime fell by 41%, from 3.8 million to 2.3 million incidents, with more gradual decreases being recorded thereafter.

The general trend over the last decade has been a continued period of modest annual decreases. Though often not large enough to be statistically significant year-on-year, the cumulative effect of these changes has been statistically significant over the medium-term, with the estimated number of violent incidents having decreased by 29% between the year ending March 2009 and the year ending March 2016 surveys, to 1.3 million incidents. In the past few years, estimates of CSEW violence have been fairly flat, with no statistically significant change occurring since the year ending March 2014.

The recent trend in violent crime demonstrated by the CSEW is supported by [research](#) conducted by the Violence and Society Research Group at Cardiff University. Their annual survey, covering a sample of hospital emergency departments and walk-in centres in England and Wales, shows that serious violence-related attendances in 2015 were broadly similar to the level recorded in 2014 following a declining trend seen in earlier years. In addition, the most recent admissions data for NHS hospitals in England provide similar findings. Assault admissions¹ showed very little change in the year ending March 2016, decreasing by less than 1% from the previous year.

Figure 1.2: Trends in police recorded and Crime Survey for England and Wales violent crime, year ending December 1981 to year ending March 2016



Following changes in recording practices from the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) in April 2002², violence against the person offences recorded by the police rose to 845,673 offences in the year ending March 2005. Such major changes to the way that police record crime, including the expansion of the [Home Office Counting Rules \(HOCR\)](#) in April 1998, mean that levels of police recorded crime cannot be compared across these recording changes.

Between the year ending March 2005 and March 2013, the number of “violence against the person” offences recorded by the police fell from 845,673 to 601,141. Since then, there have been substantial annual increases each year and the latest figures show there were 992,424 violent offences recorded in the year ending March 2016. This latest figure represents the highest number of violent crimes recorded by the police in a 12-month period since the introduction of the NCRS in 2002.

While both the police recorded figures and the CSEW showed reductions in violent crime between the year ending March 2008 and the year ending March 2013, police recorded violent crime fell at a faster rate (20%) than CSEW violent crime (8%). Over the last 3 years, the trends in the 2 sources have differed – CSEW violence has continued to fall but police recorded violent crime has increased by 65%, largely driven by the police response to findings of 2 recent HMIC inspections. More information on the increase in police recorded violent crime can be found in Annex 1.

For all crime, it is possible to calculate a ratio comparing the volume of CSEW reported crime and police recorded crime using measures of the comparable subset of crimes from both sources⁴. If all crimes from the CSEW subset were reported to the police and subsequently recorded by the police, the ratio would be 1.

The ratio demonstrates that the gap between the 2 series has narrowed substantially in the last few years. From the year ending March 2008, there were year-on-year reductions in the ratio, with the number of police recorded crimes falling as low as 0.71 of reported crimes in the CSEW in the years ending March 2012 and March 2013. The ratio has since increased each year, to 0.82 in the year ending March 2014, 0.89 in the year ending March 2015, and then to 0.97 in the year ending March 2016⁵. This provides further evidence that improvement in police recording, rather than actual increases in criminality, has been the main driver of the rise in police recorded crime. The current ratio demonstrates that a greater proportion of crimes being picked up in the CSEW (and then reported by the victim) are recorded by the police.

Notes for: Interpreting trends in violent crime

1. '[Hospital Admitted Patient Care Activity, 2015-16](#)' provided by NHS Digital. Assault admissions do not include sexual offences but include assault codes X85 to Y04 and Y08 and Y09 from the dataset.
2. See Chapter 3.3 of the [User Guide](#) for further information.
3. The HOCR for recorded crime were expanded to include certain additional summary offences.
4. These are outlined in Section 4.1 of the [User Guide](#).
5. For more information see section 4.2 of the [User Guide](#).

5 . What is happening to trends for different types of violent crime?

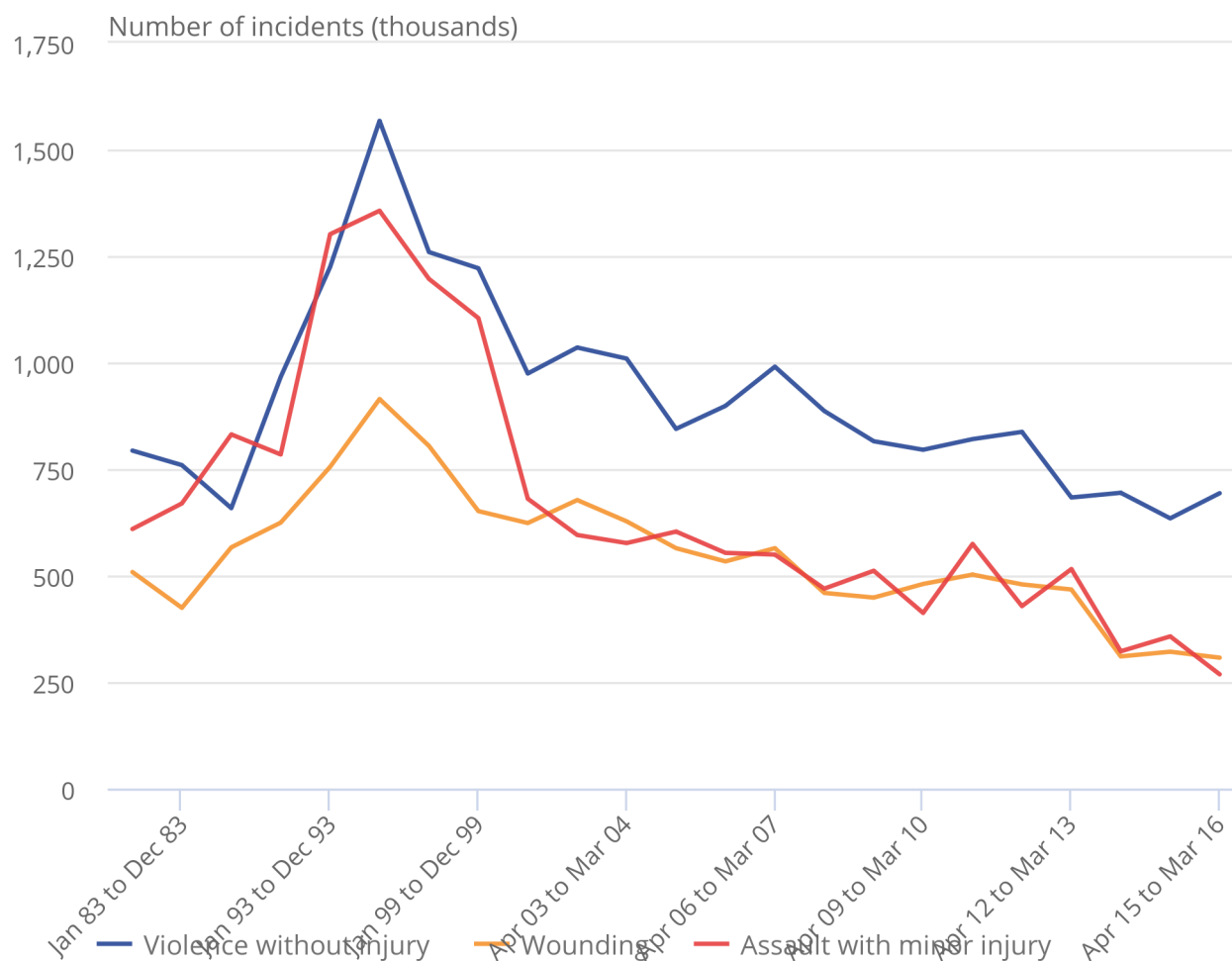
Trends in Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) violence by type of violence¹ show large reductions across all violent crime types between the mid to late 1990s and the year ending March 2016 (Figure 1.3). Assaults with minor injury have decreased by 80% since the peak in the year ending December 1995, while wounding and violence without injury decreased by 66% and 56% respectively.

There were an estimated 693,000 incidents of violence without injury in the year ending March 2016, which accounted for over half (55%) of all violence against adults in England and Wales. There was no statistically significant change from the previous year's survey.

Wounding (307,000) and assaults with minor injury (268,000) also saw no significant change in the same period, although the estimated number of incidents of these types of violence is the lowest since the survey began.

Figure 1.3: Trends in violence by type of violence, year ending December 1981 to year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales

Figure 1.3: Trends in violence by type of violence, year ending December 1981 to year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Within the overall category of police recorded violence against the person, there were 431,012 offences of violence with injury in the year ending March 2016, an increase of 15% from the previous year. This follows a fluctuating trend since the year ending March 2003, where violence with injury peaked at 543,500 offences in the year ending March 2006, and then gradually declined before rising again from the year ending March 2014.

The majority of the increase in violence with injury between the year ending March 2016 and the previous year was made up of assaults with injury, which increased by 15% (a volume increase of 53,925) ([Table A4, year ending September 2016](#)). The increase also includes a 21% rise in the number of attempted murder offences (a volume increase of 118) in the last year. Attempted murder rose in 26 of the 44 police forces (including the British Transport Police) in England and Wales in the year ending March 2016 ([Open Data Table](#)); this increase may have been influenced by improvements in crime recording.

Prior to the recent improvements in recording practices, it is possible that some police officers may have been applying Crown Prosecution Service charging standards (guidelines on what charges should be brought against suspects) when deciding what type of crime to record rather than basing the decision on the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR), which require offences to be recorded in line with the criminal offence committed. Attempted murder is an important example of this potential issue, as offences may have previously been recorded (and charged) as another type of violent crime that is easier to prove in court, such as “assault with intent to cause serious harm”.

The trend in the number of police recorded violence without injury offences was relatively flat between the years ending March 2006 and March 2014, fluctuating around 300,000 offences per year. Following this there was an increase of 30% to 403,584 offences in the year ending March 2015, and a 39% increase to 560,838 offences in the year ending March 2016. The majority of the increase in the most recent year was made up of harassment, which increased by 73,867 offences (91%) and assault without injury, which increased by 70,329 offences (26%).

In April 2015, harassment, a sub-category of violence without injury, was expanded to include 2 additional offences that were previously non-notifiable – “Disclosure of private sexual photographs and films with the intent to cause distress or anxiety” and “Sending letters with intent to cause distress or anxiety”. The large rise in harassment in the year ending March 2016 is almost entirely a result of the incorporation of these offences, as well as an increase in reporting rates (see the ‘Reporting violence to the police’ section of this chapter for more information). The expansion of the harassment category has been a significant contributor to the recent rise in violent crime, with the 2 additional offences contributing 43% to the increase in “violence without injury” sub-category² and one-third (33%) to the overall rise in violence against the person offences, in the latest year.

A separate notifiable offence of stalking was introduced in April 2014, as a result of the [Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#). Stalking offences were previously embedded within other categories, including harassment. This change in the law should therefore be taken into account when looking at trends in harassment ([Appendix Table 4, year ending September 2016](#)).

Within the overall increase in violence without injury, threats to kill, cruelty to children or young persons and assault without injury on a constable also saw large increases in the year ending March 2016. Threats to kill increased by 4,409 offences (34%), cruelty to children or young persons increased by 3,780 offences (41%) and assault without injury on a constable increased by 1,090 offences (8%) ([Appendix Table 4, year ending September 2016](#)).

The large increases in the year ending March 2016 compared with the previous year are likely to be due to an improvement in crime recording by the police and an increase in the willingness of victims to come forward and report these crimes to the police, rather than a genuine rise in violent crime³. It is thought that recording improvements are more likely to affect relatively less serious violent offences, which explains the larger increase in violence without injury compared with violence with injury. Evidence provided by the Metropolitan Police⁴ states that, whilst violence against the person crimes recorded by them increased by 15%, the number of “calls for service”⁵ relating to violent crime decreased by 4% in the year ending March 2016, compared with a rise of 4% in the previous year. This, along with evidence from the CSEW, which shows no significant change in the prevalence of violent crime in recent years, suggests that the rise in recorded violence against the person is largely due to process improvements rather than a genuine increase in violent crime.

Modern slavery

Modern slavery can take multiple forms including sexual exploitation, forced labour and domestic servitude. Before 1 April 2015, modern slavery offences were recorded under trafficking for sexual exploitation, immigration offences, and other indictable or triable-either-way offences. As of 1 April 2015, a separately identifiable crime recording category of modern slavery was introduced. The [Modern Slavery Act 2015](#) consolidated existing slavery and trafficking offences into one Act. These provisions came into force on 31 July 2015.

There were 880 modern slavery crimes recorded by the police in the year ending March 2016 (see [Appendix Table 4, year ending September 2016](#)). For more information on modern slavery, see [Crime in England and Wales: year ending September 2016](#) .

Notes for: What is happening to trends for different types of violent crime?

1. See Chapter 5.1 of the [User Guide](#) for more information on the offences included in this breakdown.
2. Figures taken from the Home Office Data Hub. The Home Office Data Hub (HODH) is intended to provide a central database of crime replacing existing statistical returns. Forces have been progressively switching over to the hub with 35 of the 44 police forces providing recorded crime data solely via this route.
3. The inspections that triggered improvements in recording took place between December 2013 and August 2014, which overlaps with part of the time period covered by the comparator year in this release (year ending March 2015).
4. [Metropolitan Police Service Recorded Crime Figures and Associated Data](#) published on London Datastore.
5. Calls for service refer to emergency and non-emergency calls from members of the public or police to attend an incident or investigate a case.

6 . How are victims and perpetrators of violence related?

In the year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), 43% (544,000 offences) of violent offences were perpetrated by an acquaintance¹, 37% (467,000 offences) by a stranger², and the remaining 20% (254,000 offences) were categorised as domestic violence perpetrated by a partner or ex-partner, or a family member (Figure 1.4). These figures have fluctuated over recent years, with acquaintance violence accounting for the largest proportion of offences in some years and stranger violence accounting for the largest proportion of offences in others (Figure 1.4).

Acquaintance violence

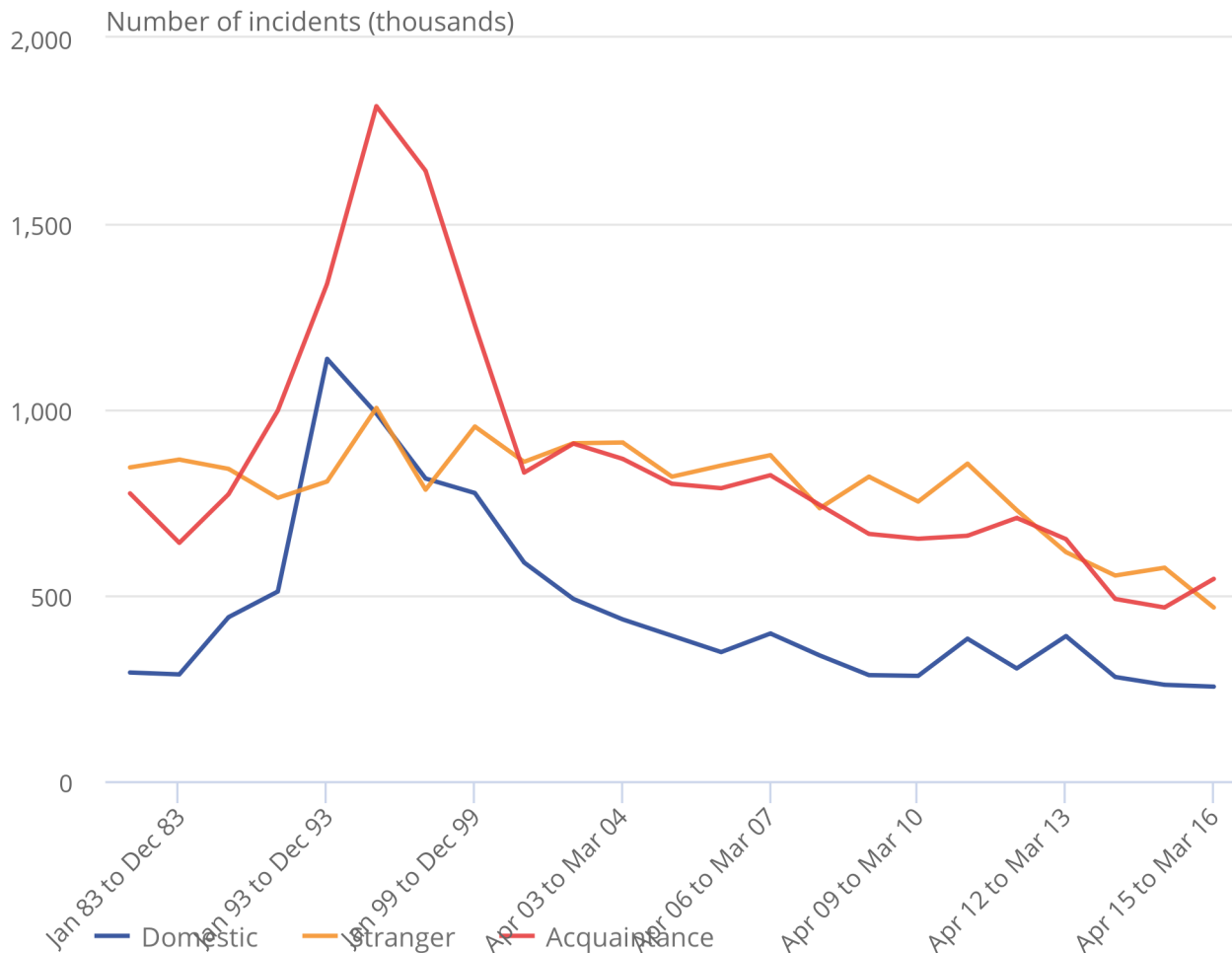
CSEW acquaintance violence fell by 70% from the peak of 1.8 million offences in the year ending December 1995 to an estimated 544,000 offences in the year ending March 2016 (Figure 1.4). There was no statistically significant change in the year ending March 2016 compared with the previous year. Acquaintance violence is a large-volume offence, and its substantial changes seen since the mid-1990s have been an important driver of changes in overall violence.

Stranger violence

Incidents of stranger violence have fallen by 53%, from the peak of 1 million offences in the year ending December 1995, to an estimated 467,000 offences in the year ending March 2016 (Figure 1.4). In recent years, stranger violence has shown the largest reduction in number of incidents, decreasing by 45% from 854,000 in the year ending March 2011. There was no statistically significant change in stranger violence in the year ending March 2016 from the previous year; however, the most recent figure is the lowest volume of stranger violence ever recorded by the survey.

Figure 1.4: Trends in violent crime by type of perpetrator, year ending December 1981 to year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales

Figure 1.4: Trends in violent crime by type of perpetrator, year ending December 1981 to year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. The year ending December 1991 estimates for domestic, acquaintance and stranger violence were calculated based on the estimate for all violence. Estimates for these individual categories could not be calculated using their individual incidence rates because the data used for calculating these rates were not collected for that year.

Domestic violence

Domestic violence here refers to incidents reported through the CSEW face-to-face interview³, but it is important to bear in mind that domestic violence measured this way is prone to significant under-reporting and is impacted by the current methodology for handling repeat victimisation; therefore the 254,000 incidents of domestic violence measured by the year ending March 2016 CSEW is an under-estimation of the true extent of domestic violence.

Of those aged 16 to 59 who reported being victims of physical domestic abuse in the CSEW self-completion⁴ module on intimate violence, only 16%⁵ also reported being a victim of domestic violence in the face-to-face interview. If the main face-to-face survey was able to capture domestic violence more accurately, then the proportion of CSEW violence that is domestic abuse-related would be much higher than the 20% reported here (Figure 1.4).

As mentioned above, the face-to-face CSEW measure of domestic violence is impacted by the current method of handling high frequency repeat victimisation. CSEW estimates of the number of crimes currently only include the first 5 incidents in a “series” of victimisations, that is, “the same thing, done under the same circumstances and probably by the same people”. This restriction to the first 5 incidents in a series has been applied since the CSEW began in order to ensure that estimates are not affected by a very small number of respondents who report an extremely high number of incidents and which are highly variable between survey years. This methodology, which is commonly used in general population surveys, has very little impact on most crime types, but has a larger impact on estimates of domestic violence given its often repeated nature.

We will be changing this methodology in the future (see the ‘Things you need to know’ section of this chapter for more information on the review of the current and alternative methods and the proposed change to the methodology) however, even with the new methodology, estimates obtained from the face-to-face CSEW interview will still be a large under-estimation of the level of domestic violence experienced by adults within England and Wales because of the high level of under-reporting of this type of violence in face-to-face interviews. More information can be found in section 2 of the [User Guide for Crime Statistics](#).

The 254,000 incidents of domestic violence estimated by the face-to-face CSEW in the year ending March 2016 can therefore only tell us that 20% of the violence measured by this source was domestic violence, and does not provide an indication of the true level of domestic violence. The separate self-completion section of the survey, collected on a comparable basis since the year ending March 2005, is the more complete measure of such crime and also uses a broader definition of domestic abuse⁶. The self-completion module reveals significantly higher levels of domestic abuse victimisation, and provides a greater level of detail (see the ‘Domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking’ chapter of this release)⁷.

Notes for: How are victims and perpetrators of violence related?

1. Acquaintance violence is comprised of wounding and assaults in which the victim knew one or more of the perpetrators at least by sight. It does not include domestic violence.
2. Stranger violence includes wounding and assaults in which the victim did not have any information about the perpetrator(s), or did not know and had never seen the perpetrator(s) before.
3. In a “face-to-face” interview, an interviewer reads the questions out to the respondent and records the answers given.
4. “Self-completion” means that the respondent reads the questions themselves and records their answers directly onto a laptop.
5. In previous years, this analysis has included victims of any sexual assault by a partner or family member but these victims have now been excluded to be more comparable with the definition of domestic violence used in the face-to-face CSEW interview.
6. The definition includes emotional or financial abuse and threats to hurt the respondent or someone close to them, rather than just physical violence.
7. The self-completion module gives a more accurate picture of the extent of domestic abuse as respondents are more willing to report domestic abuse in this self-completion module than in the face-to-face part of the survey.

7 . What do we know about sexual offences?

The most recent estimates from the self-completion module on intimate violence in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) showed that 2.0% (equivalent to 645,000 victims) of adults aged 16 to 59¹ had been victims of sexual assaults in the last year². The prevalence of sexual assault was not statistically significantly different than the previous year’s survey (1.7%). The figure has remained at around 2% since the survey year ending March 2009, albeit with some year-on-year fluctuation ([Appendix Table 4.05](#)). More detailed commentary on trends in sexual offences from the CSEW is included in the ‘Domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking’ chapter of this publication.

There were 106,098 police recorded sexual offences in the year ending March 2016, an increase of 20% compared with the previous year. This continues an upward trend since the year ending March 2012, which appears to be driven by improved recording processes and a greater proportion of victims willing to report such crimes to the police. The latest figure is the highest since the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) in April 2002. The rate of year-on-year increases, however, appears to be slowing, with the latest increase being considerably less than that for the previous year (38%).

Within the overall increase, the number of offences of rape increased by 22% to 35,699 offences, and the number of other sexual offences increased by 19% to 70,399 offences ([Appendix Table 4, year ending September 2016](#)), both of which are the highest figures since the introduction of the NCRS in 2002. Within the category of “other sexual offences”, the largest increases were seen in sexual assault on a female aged 13 and over (20% increase to 27,852), sexual activity involving a child under 16 (31% increase to 11,337) and sexual grooming (51% increase to 1,021).

The increase in police recorded sexual offences is thought to reflect both an improvement in the recording of sexual offences by the police and an increased willingness of victims to come forward to report these crimes to the police. Therefore, it is not thought that these figures currently provide a reliable indication of trends in sexual offences. These figures should be seen in the context of a number of high-profile reports and inquiries, which are thought to have resulted in police forces reviewing and improving their recording practices³, including [HMIC’s inspection of crime recording](#), published in late 2014, which concluded that across England and Wales an estimated 1 in 4 (26%) sexual offences that should have been recorded as crimes were not⁴.

Previous increases in the number of sexual offences reported to the police were shown to have also been related to a rise in the reporting of non-recent offences (those that took place over 12 months before being reported) following “Operation Yewtree”, which began in 2012⁵. The high-profile coverage of this operation and the police response to it are likely to have increased the willingness of victims to come forward to report such offences, both current and non-recent. Information from the Home Office Data Hub shows that in the year ending March 2016, 80% of sexual offences were recorded within 12 months of the offence taking place (recent offences), with 20% occurring more than one year before they were reported (non-recent offences). There have been increases in both current sexual offences (up 22%) and non-recent sexual offences (up 15%) over the last year. The number of offences that took place over 20 years ago is 8% higher in the year ending March 2016 compared with the previous year. These offences are increasing despite Operation Yewtree starting in October 2012.

Notes for: What do we know about sexual offences?

1. ONS are considering improving the population coverage by removing this upper age limit for the self-completion module. For more information see section 2 of ‘[Improving Crime Statistics for England and Wales – progress update](#)’ published on 19 January 2016.
2. Including attempted offences.
3. These high profile reports include the investigation by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) and HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPSP) in 2012, which highlighted the need to improve the recording and investigation of sexual offences.
4. For more information see the ‘Accuracy of the Statistics’ section in the statistical bulletin, [Crime in England and Wales: Year Ending September 2014](#).
5. For more information see Crime in England and Wales, Year Ending September 2013.

8 . Levels of victimisation

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) provides victimisation rates for overall violence and for each individual type of violence.

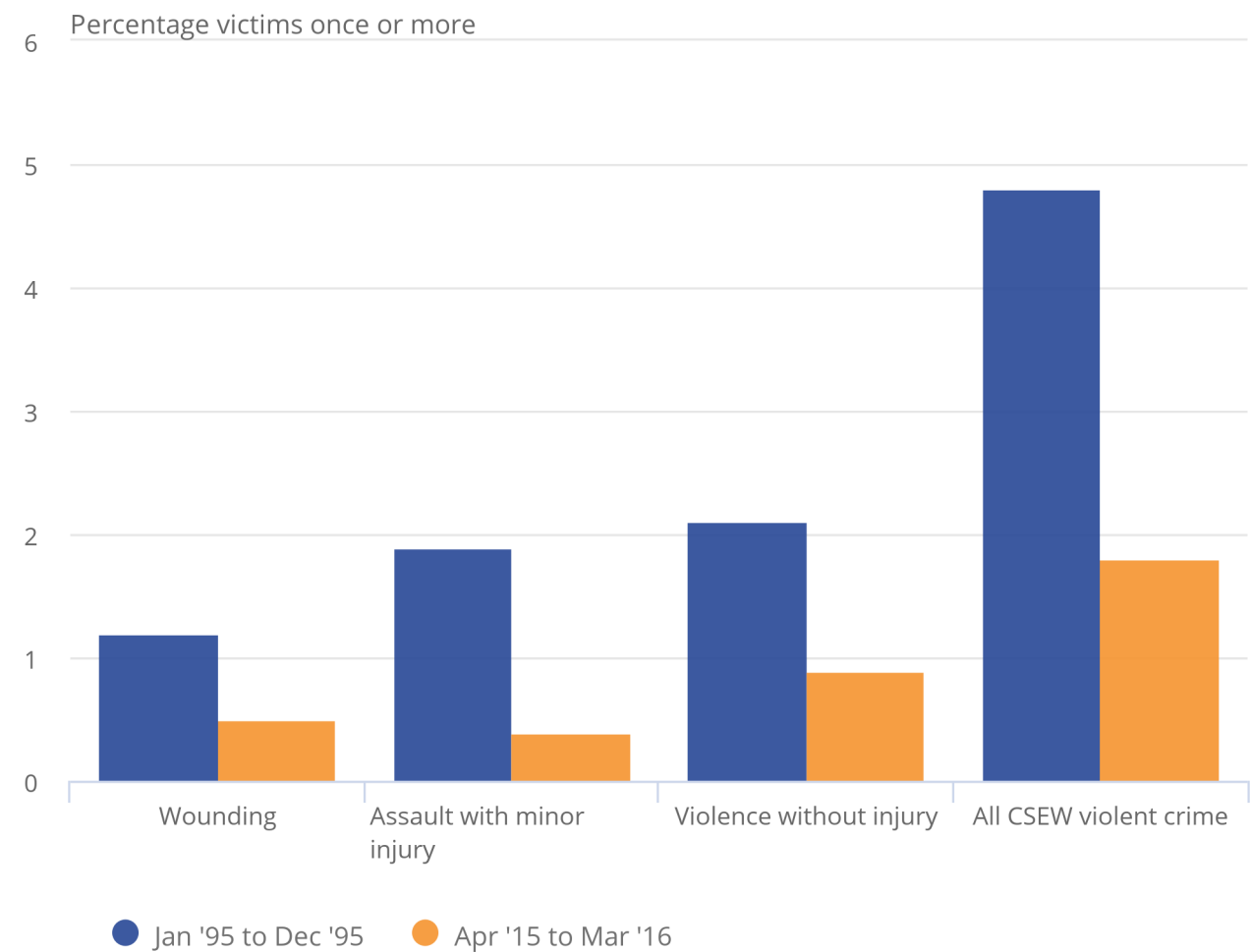
Based on those interviewed in the year ending March 2016, 1.8% of adults aged 16 and over were a victim of violent crime, 0.9% were a victim of violence without injury, 0.5% a victim of wounding, and 0.4% a victim of assault with minor injury in the previous 12 months (Figure 1.6). Figures were similar to the previous year’s survey.

Victimisation rates for violent crime have fallen considerably since 1995 when crime was at its peak. The latest figure (1.8%) is less than half that estimated by the year ending December 1995 survey (4.8%).

Victimisation rates for all types of CSEW violence have dropped by more than half between the year ending December 1995 and the year ending March 2016. The largest decline over this period has been for assault with minor injury, which at 0.4% in the year ending March 2016 was around a fifth of the rate in the year ending December 1995 (1.9%).

Figure 1.5: Violent crime, victimisation of adults aged 16 and over, year ending December 1995 and year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales

Figure 1.5: Violent crime, victimisation of adults aged 16 and over, year ending December 1995 and year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

The year ending March 2016 CSEW estimated that 5.8% of children aged 10 to 15 were a victim of violent crime in the preceding 12 months, showing no statistically significant change from the previous year's survey. Within all violent crime, children were more commonly victims of violence with injury than violence without injury (4.4% compared with 1.5%)¹ ([Appendix Table 11, year ending March 2016](#)).

Repeat victimisation

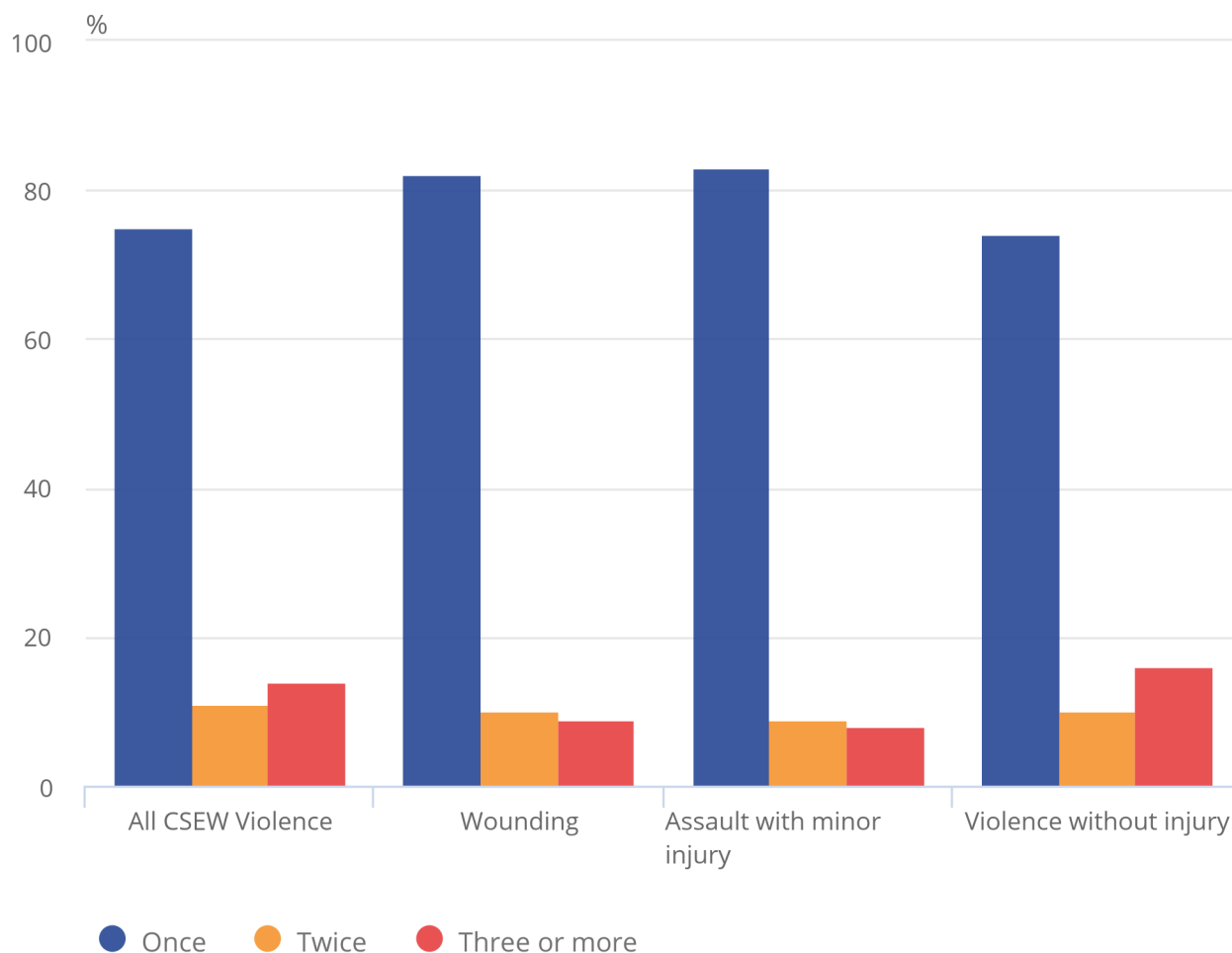
This section provides information on the repeat victimisation experienced by victims of violence. However, the most common type of violence to be experienced on a repeated basis is domestic violence, which is not well measured by the face-to-face interview of the CSEW (see the 'Domestic violence' section of this chapter for more information). Therefore, the analysis can only be used to draw conclusions about the repeat victimisation of the violence measured by this source, and cannot be used to draw any conclusions about the overall level of repeat victimisation experienced, or the repeat victimisation of victims of domestic violence.

We are reviewing the current methodology for handling repeat victimisation (see the 'Things you need to know' and 'Domestic violence' sections of this chapter for more information), but this will not address the high level of under-reporting of domestic violence in face-to-face interviews. In addition, no information on the repeat victimisation of sexual offences is provided as these offences are not included in the survey's main estimates (see the 'Domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking' chapter of this release for more information).

In the year ending March 2016 survey, the CSEW showed that 75% of victims of violence were victimised once, while 25% were repeat victims in the previous 12 months (11% victimised twice, 14% victimised 3 times or more, Figure 1.6). The level of repeat victimisation shows no significant change from the previous year's survey, but has significantly decreased by 14 percentage points since 1995 ([Annual Trend and Demographic Table D6](#), year ending March 2016). The latest estimates showed that 51% of violent incidents were experienced by repeat victims, compared with 69% in the year ending December 1995 (when CSEW violence peaked) and 57% in the year ending March 2006 ([Annual Trend and Demographic Table D7](#)).

Repeat victimisation was most common for violence without injury (26% of victims). Levels of repeat victimisation were similar for both wounding (18%) and assault with minor injury (17%).

Figure 1.6. Number of times victims were victimised, year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

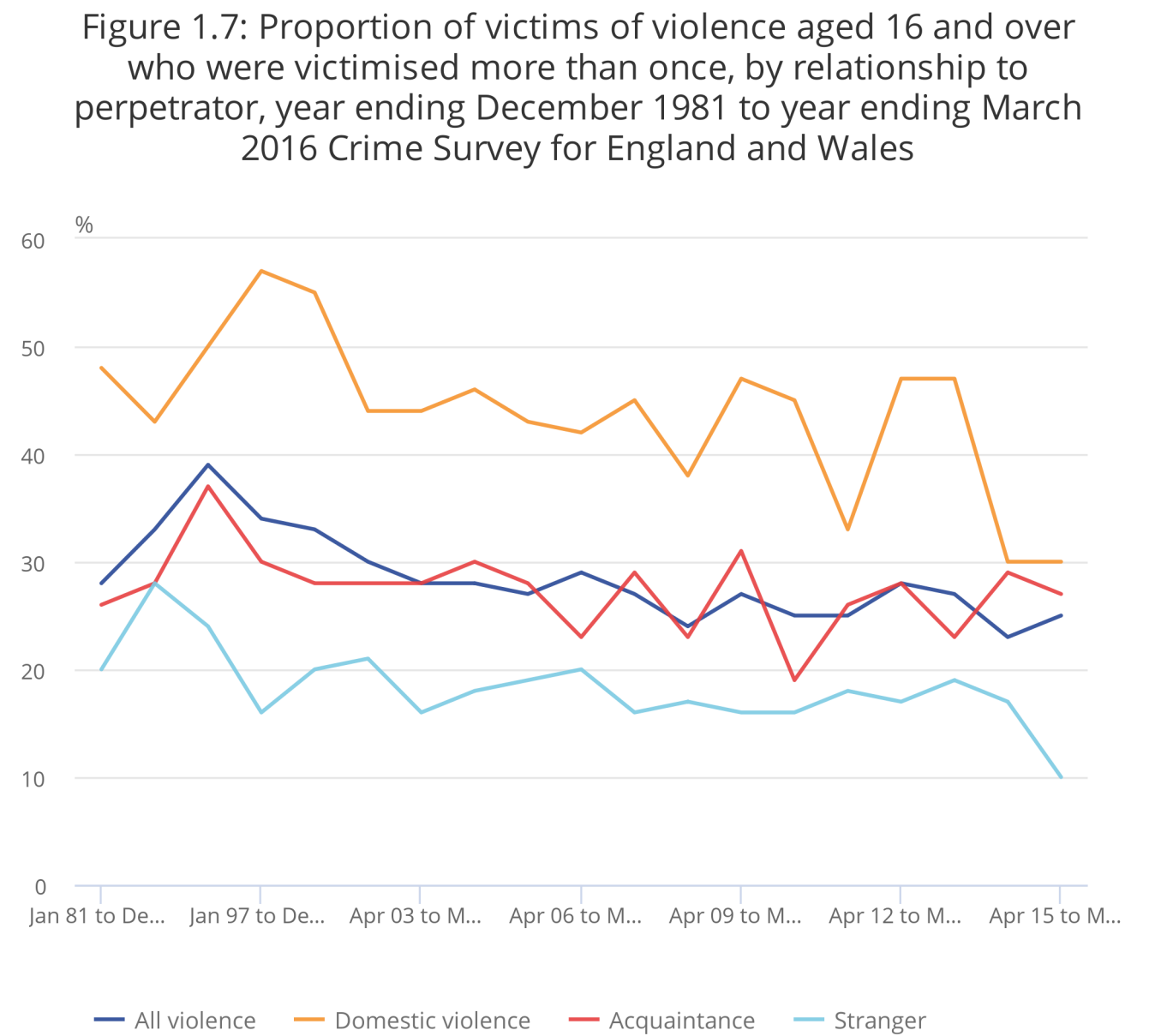
Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Repeat victimisation of assault with minor injury has fluctuated over the years but has decreased significantly by 16 percentage points since 1995 and is at its lowest since the survey began. Repeat victimisation of wounding has shown more volatile fluctuations from year-to-year, but with no significant change from the year ending December 1995. Repeat victimisation of violence without injury has also fluctuated over the years, but has decreased significantly by 13 percentage points since 1995 ([Appendix Table 1.08](#)).

In the year ending March 2016, 30% of victims of domestic violence measured by the CSEW were repeat victims (Figure 1.7), higher than for violence by either an acquaintance (27%) or a stranger (10%). However, it should be noted that these proportions fluctuate considerably from year-to-year and this does not provide a complete picture of repeat victimisation suffered by victims of domestic abuse.

The CSEW self-completion module provides a more complete measure and a greater level of detail on domestic abuse. We are also developing questions to better measure frequency of abuse (and therefore repeat victimisation) in the self-completion module (see ‘Domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking’ chapter of this publication for more information).

Figure 1.7: Proportion of victims of violence aged 16 and over who were victimised more than once, by relationship to perpetrator, year ending December 1981 to year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Prior to year ending March 2002, CSEW respondents were asked about their experience of crime in the previous calendar year, so year-labels identify the year in which the crime took place. Following the change to continuous interviewing, respondents' experience of crime relates to the full 12 months prior to interview (i.e. a moving reference period), so year-labels from year ending March 2002 onwards identify the CSEW year of interview.

Notes for: Levels of victimisation

1. Some methodological differences between the adult and children's surveys mean that direct comparisons cannot be made between the adult and child victimisation data.

9 . Characteristics associated with being a victim

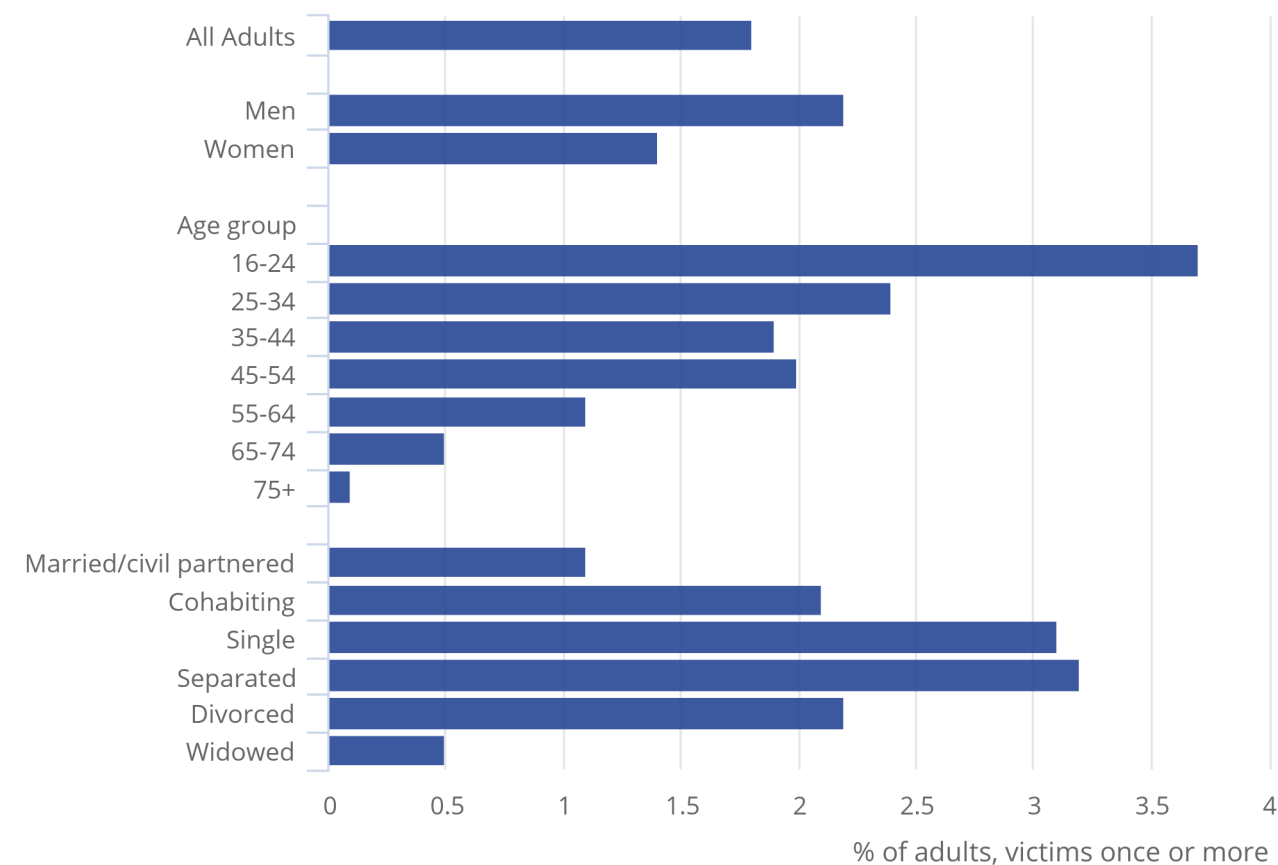
The proportion of adult victims of violent crime in the year ending March 2016 survey varied by certain personal and household characteristics (see [Appendix Tables 1.01 to 1.04](#) for a full breakdown). Many of the characteristics are closely associated with each other, so caution is needed in the interpretation of these different characteristics when viewed in isolation. Separate analysis on the characteristics associated with being a victim of intimate violence is available in the 'Domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking' chapter of this publication.

The main characteristics were:

- Men were more likely to be a victim of violent crime measured by the face-to-face Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) interview than women (2.2% of males compared with 1.4% of females ¹, Figure 1.8)², with stranger violence showing the largest difference in victimisation between men and women (1.2% compared with 0.4%).
- Adults aged 16 to 24 were more likely to be a victim of violent crime (3.7%), particularly acquaintance or stranger violence (1.8%) than any other age group ([Appendix Table 1.03](#)).
- Those who were widowed (0.5%) or were married or civil partnered (1.1%) were less likely to be a victim of violent crime than adults with any other marital status.
- Adults living in the 20% most deprived output areas were more likely to be a victim of violent crime (2.5%) than those living in other output areas (1.7%) – particularly those living in the 20% least deprived output areas (1.2%).
- Renters (2.8% social and 2.4% private) were more likely to be a victim of violent crime than home owners (1.3%) ([Appendix Table 1.02](#)).

Figure 1.8: Characteristics associated with being a victim of violence, year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales

Figure 1.8: Characteristics associated with being a victim of violence, year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. See Section 7.3 of [User Guide](#) for definitions of personal characteristics.

The children's element of the survey, covering respondents aged 10 to 15, showed that boys were more likely than girls to have experienced violent crime (7.3% compared with 4.2%). See Tables D3 and D4 of the [Annual Trend and Demographic Tables](#), year ending March 2016 for more information.

Notes for: Characteristics associated with being a victim

1. This pattern is different for domestic abuse and sexual assault. For more information please see the 'Domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking' chapter of this publication.
2. These estimates contrast with police recorded data from the Home Office Data Hub, which found that the victim was female in 53% of violent offences and male in 47% of offences (see Chapter 5 of this release for more detail).

10 . Profile of perpetrators involved in violent crimes

Victims of violent crime were able to provide some detail about the perpetrator(s) for 99% of incidents ([Nature of Crime Table 3.1](#)). The following profiles are based on the victims' recollection and perception of the perpetrator (s).

Perpetrators were most likely to be male, being reported to be the perpetrator in three-quarters of violent incidents (76%). Perpetrators were also most likely to be aged between 25 and 39, with the perpetrator believed to belong to this age group in 42% of violent incidents.

In 74% of violent incidents, a sole perpetrator was reported to have been responsible. For incidents with more than one perpetrator, victims most commonly reported that 4 or more perpetrators (11% of incidents) or 2 perpetrators (10% of incidents) were involved.

The number of perpetrators involved varied by the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator. Only 1% of domestic violence incidents involved more than one perpetrator, compared with 24% of incidents of acquaintance violence and 43% of incidents of stranger violence. Incidents involving 4 or more perpetrators accounted for 14% of acquaintance violence and 15% of stranger violence, but no incidents of domestic violence.

Victims believed the perpetrator(s) to be under the influence of alcohol in 40% (491,000) of violent incidents¹. In 19% (237,000) of violent incidents, the victim believed the perpetrator(s) to be under the influence of drugs ([Nature of Crime Table 3.11](#)). Characteristics of perpetrators of alcohol-related violent crime can be found in [Appendix Table 1.07](#).

Victims aged 10 to 15 were able to say something about the perpetrator in 94% of violent incidents in the year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW). Incidents of violence against children were most likely to be committed by someone known well to the victim (52% of incidents), with a small proportion of incidents being committed by strangers (12%). The perpetrator was a pupil at the victim's school in 68% of violent incidents, and was a friend (including boyfriend or girlfriend) in 11% of incidents. The perpetrator was most likely to be male (81% of incidents) and aged between 10 and 15 (78%) ([Nature of Crime Table 4.3](#)).

Notes for: Profile of perpetrators involved in violent crimes

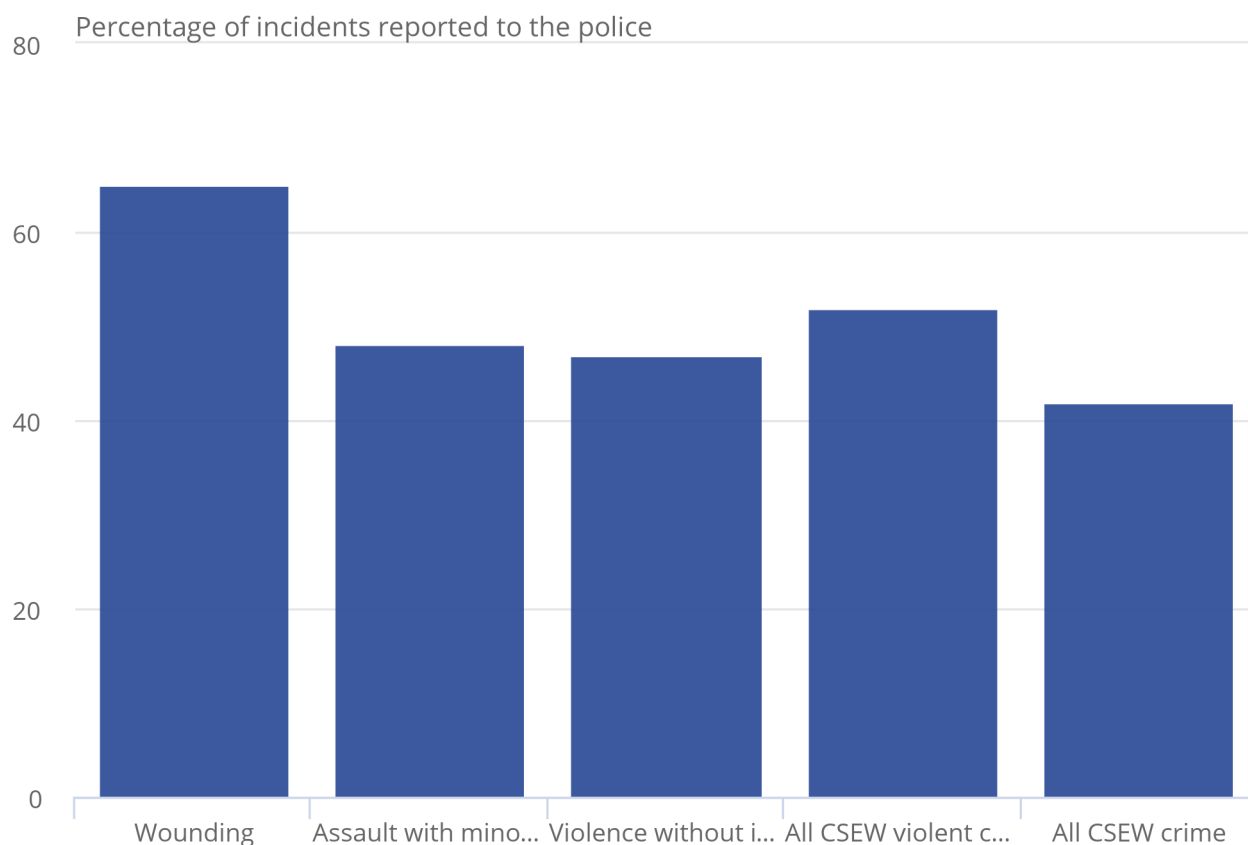
1. Questions were asked if the victim was able to say something about the perpetrator(s), which they could do in nearly all (99%) incidents. If there was more than one perpetrator, victims were asked if any of the perpetrators were perceived to be under the influence. Questions were not asked if any perpetrator was perceived to be under 10 years.

11 . Reporting violence to the police

Victims of violent crime were asked if they reported the incident to the police. In the year ending March 2016, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimated that 52% of violent incidents were reported to the police. This is similar to the figure for the previous year (49%), but shows a 10 percentage point increase from the year ending March 2012 survey. However, the figure has remained fairly flat over the last few years (Annual Trend and Demographic Table D8, year ending March 2016). This latest reporting rate for violence compares with a reporting rate for all CSEW crime of 42%.

As in previous years, variations in reporting rates continue to occur by type of violence, with 65% of wounding incidents in the latest survey year being reported to the police compared with 48% of incidents of assault with minor injury or no injury (Figure 1.9). This indicates respondents are more likely to report more serious incidents to the police.

Figure 1.9: Proportion of violent crime incidents reported to the police, year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

In the year ending March 2016, the CSEW showed that 14% of violent incidents experienced by children aged 10 to 15 were reported to the police ([Nature of Crime Table 4.5](#)). This figure is likely to reflect the relative low severity of violent incidents experienced by children.

12 . When do violent crimes occur?

Victims of violent crime were asked about the circumstances of the incident during the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) interview, including when it happened. More than half of violent incidents (53%) occurred in the evening or during the night ([Nature of Crime Table 3.3](#)). Although the decrease of 4 percentage points from the previous year was not statistically significant, this is the lowest percentage of evening or night violent incidents recorded since the year ending March 2006.

Looking at the days of the week on which violent offences take place, 59% of violent incidents occurred during the week, with 41% occurring at the weekend (Table 1.1). This differs from the previous 2 years, when the majority of violent offences took place at the weekend and is significantly higher than the percentage of violent incidents that occurred during the week in the year ending March 2015. However, there is some fluctuation in this trend, and prior to this, the majority of violent offences took place during the week. It is therefore too early to conclude whether the change seen in the year ending March 2016 is the beginning of a new pattern. Timing of alcohol-related violent crime can be found in [Appendix Table 1.05](#).

In the year ending March 2016, 90% of incidents of violence against children aged 10 to 15 occurred during the week and 10% of incidents occurred at the weekend. This highlights the different lifestyles of children compared with adults, and also reflects the fact that a large proportion of violent incidents against children (71%) occurred in and around school ([Nature of Crime Tables 4.1 and 4.2](#)).

Table 1.1: Timing of violent incidents, year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales

England and Wales					Percentage adults aged 16 and over/children aged 10 to 15
Timing	All Violence	Wounding	Assault with minor injury	Violence without injury	Violence against children aged 10 to 15
Morning/Afternoon ¹	47	39	37	54	..
Evening/Night ²	53	61	63	46	..
Unweighted base - number of adults	631	176	149	306	
During the week	59	56	55	62	90
At the weekend ³	41	44	45	38	10
Unweighted base - number of adults /number of children aged 10 to 15	620	176	143	301	202

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Morning is from 6am to noon; afternoon is from noon to 6pm.
 2. Evening is from 6pm to midnight; night is from midnight to 6am.
 3. Weekend is from Friday 6pm to Monday 6am.
- .. Denotes 'not available'

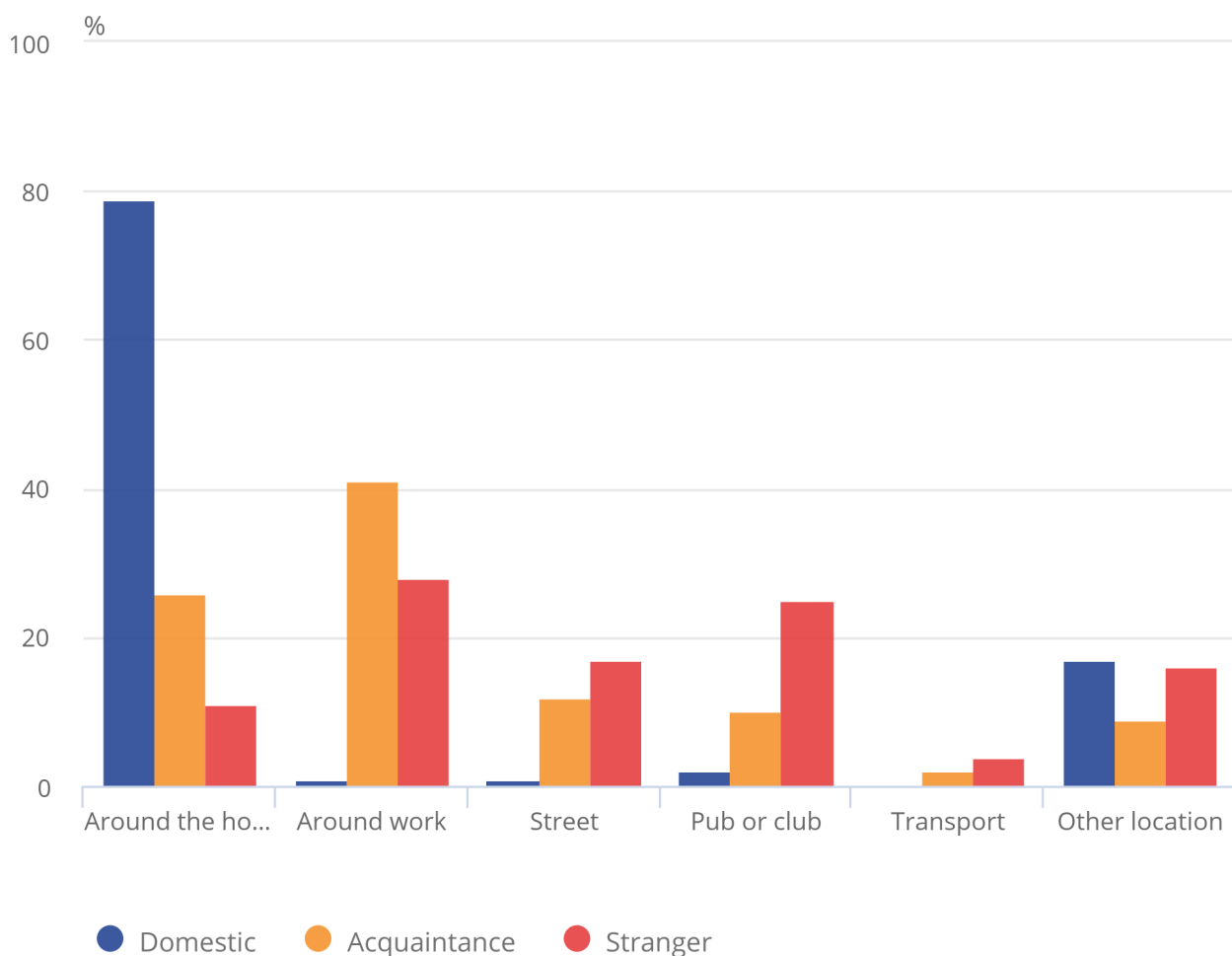
13 . Where do violent crimes occur?

In addition to asking respondents about the timing of violent crime, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) interview also asks about where such crimes took place. Similar to previous years, the location of incidents of violent crime varied by the perpetrator-victim relationship.

As expected, the large majority of incidents of domestic violence occurred around the home (79%), whereas incidents of stranger violence were most likely to occur either around work (28%) or in pubs and clubs (25%). Incidents of acquaintance violence were most likely to take place at work¹ (41%, Figure 1.10). Where alcohol-related violent crime occurred can be found in [Appendix Table 1.06](#).

Figure 1.10: Where incidents of violent crime occurred, year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales

Figure 1.10: Where incidents of violent crime occurred, year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. 'Around the home' includes home premises, whether inside/outside or garage/shed, home car park or nearby street to home.
2. 'Around work' includes work premises, whether inside/outside or work garage/car parks.
3. 'Street' includes streets near work/college/sports ground/public entertainment/train or tube stations etc., subway, park/open spaces, waste grounds, and street markets.
4. 'Pub or club' includes pub/club premises, whether inside or nearby street/car parks.
5. 'Other location' includes car parks, inside or grounds of a shop/supermarket, a school/college/university, a friends home, a place of entertainment, sports centre or somewhere else

Looking at the location of these incidents split by type of violence (Nature of Crime Table 3.2), incidents of wounding and assault with minor injury were most likely to occur around the home (43% and 32% respectively). For assault with minor injury this has been the case since the year ending March 2013 with small but non-significant changes year-on-year. However, for wounding the proportion of incidents that occurred around the home has increased by 23 percentage points since the previous year and is the largest figure since the year ending March 2013². Similarly to previous years, incidents of violence without injury were most likely to happen at work (37%).

Notes for: Where do violent crimes occur?

1. For more information see Health Safety Executive '[Violence at work](#)' report using CSEW data.
2. From April 2012, a new location variable was introduced, which means the data from the year ending March 2006 to the year ending March 2012 is not comparable with more recent years.

14 . The impact on victims

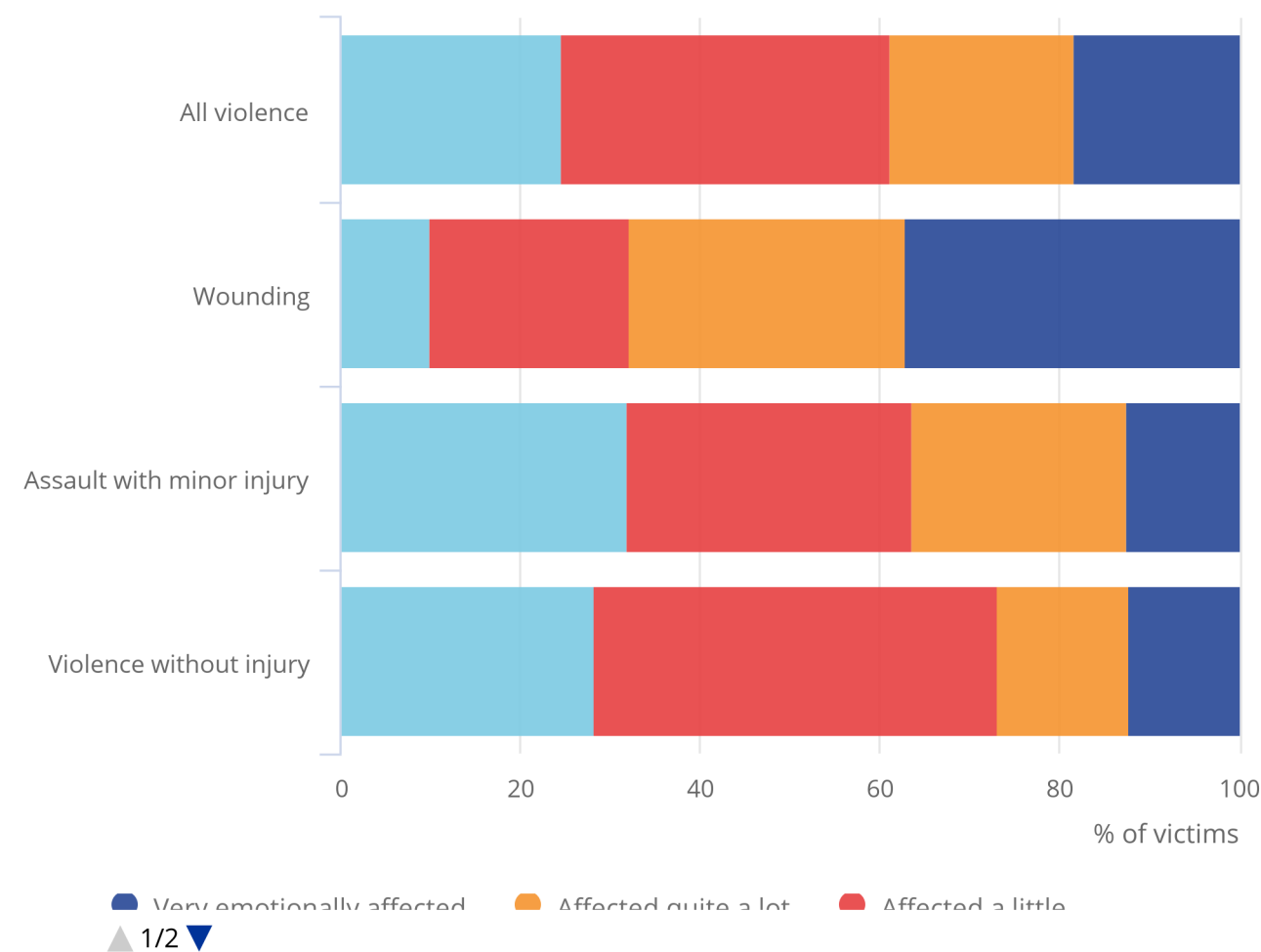
The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) asks victims about the impact of the crime they had experienced ([Nature of Crime Table 3.4](#)). In 75% of violent incidents the respondent was "emotionally affected", including 18% who were affected very much (Figure 1.11). The proportion of violent incidents where the victim was emotionally affected "very much" was lower than for incidents of burglary (24%), but higher than for other types of crime (for example, criminal damage, at 12%) ([Nature of Crime Tables 8.5](#) and [Focus on Property Crime, 2015 to 2016](#)). The respondent was "not emotionally affected" in 25% of violent incidents. This figure has increased from 19% in the previous year, but tends to fluctuate from year to year.

Incidents of wounding "emotionally affected" a higher proportion of victims (90%) than other types of violence (violence without injury 72%, and assault with minor injury 68%). In terms of the severity of the emotional impact, as expected, wounding was the type of violence where victims were most severely affected, with the majority (68%) reporting that they were "very emotionally affected" or "affected quite a lot". In comparison, around a third of victims of assault with minor injury (36%) and around a quarter of victims of violence without injury (27%) reported being "very emotionally affected" or "affected quite a lot".

The most common forms of emotional reaction to violent crimes in the year ending March 2016 CSEW were annoyance (41%), anger (37%) and shock (36%)¹. The emotional reaction was broadly similar across different types of injury ([Nature of Crime Table 3.4](#)).

Figure 1.11: Emotional response to violent crime victimisation, year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales

Figure 1.11: Emotional response to violent crime victimisation, year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales

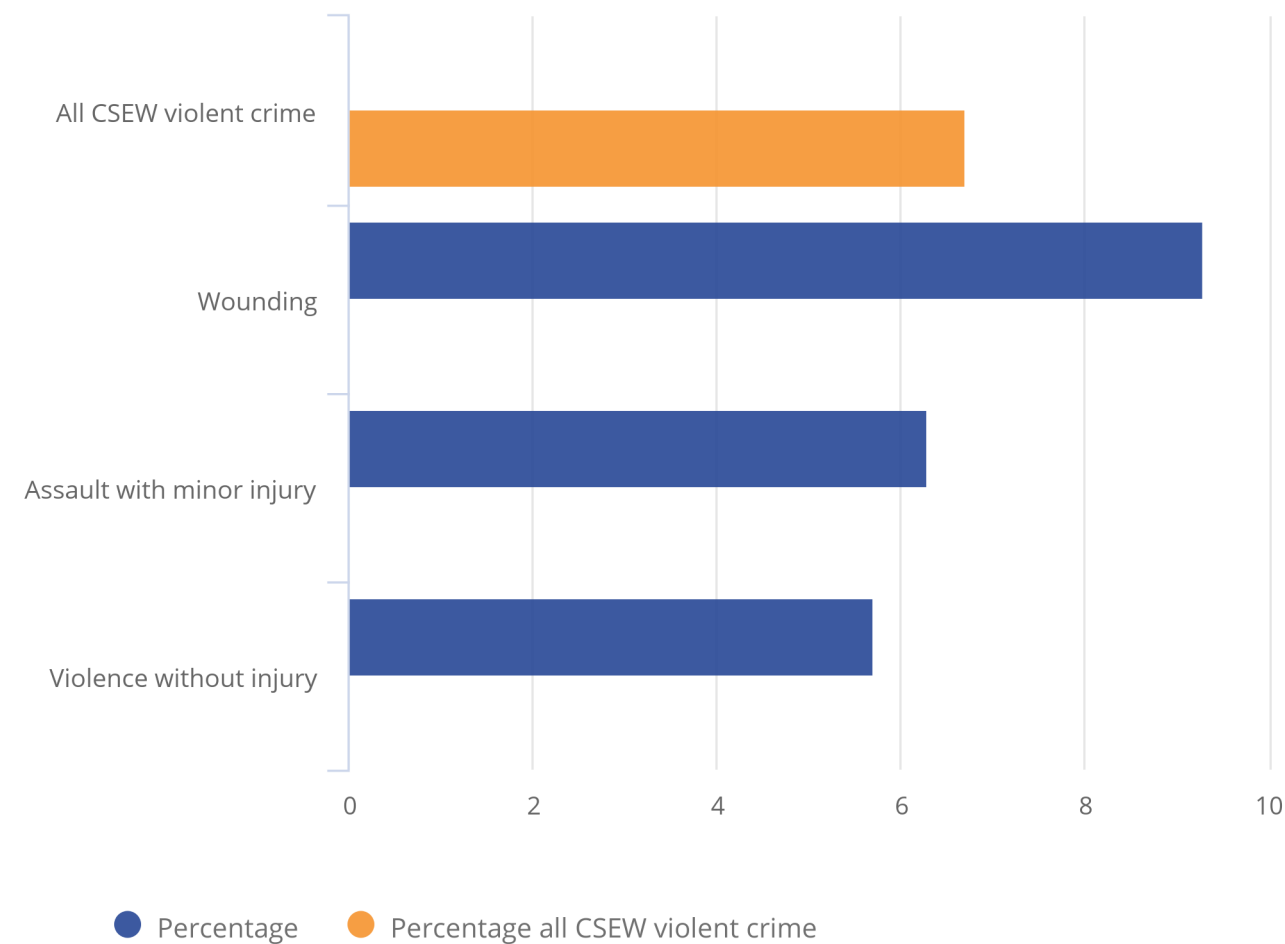


Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Victims of violence were also asked to rate the seriousness of each incident on a scale of 1 to 20, and the means of these seriousness scores are represented by the bars in Figure 1.12². As in previous years, wounding was considered to be a more serious violent crime (mean score of 9) than assault with minor injury (mean score of 6) and violence without injury (mean score of 6). Over half of all violence victims (59%) rated the incident in the least serious range of 1 to 6, with 12% rating it in the most serious range of 14 to 20 ([Nature of Crime Table 3.5](#)).

Figure 1.12: Mean perceived seriousness score of violent crime, year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales

Figure 1.12: Mean perceived seriousness score of violent crime, year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Victims aged 10 to 15 were also asked about their perceptions of any violent incidents they experienced. Based on the year ending March 2016 survey, 21% of victims aged 10 to 15 thought the violent incident was “a crime”, 42% perceived it to be “wrong, but not a crime”, and 37% thought it “was just something that happens”. In addition, 52% of incidents were perceived by the victim to be part of a series of bullying incidents ([Nature of Crime Table 4.4](#)). In comparison, 32% of theft victims aged 10 to 15 perceived the incident to be “a crime” ([Nature of Crime Table 10.4](#)). This reflects the fact that the measure of violence against children aged 10 to 15 includes a large proportion of low-level incidents, which may involve a crime in law (for example, one child deliberately pushing over another with the intention of hurting them) but which may not be viewed as serious enough to amount to an offence (see report on [Experimental statistics on victimisation of children aged 10 to 15](#)).

Notes for: The impact on victims

1. Respondents can report more than one emotion.
2. Respondents are asked to use this scale, with 1 being “a very minor crime like theft of milk bottles from a doorstep”, and 20 being “the most serious crime of murder”.

15 . Use of weapons and injuries in violent crime

A weapon was used in 21% of violent incidents according to the year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) ([Nature of Crime Table 3.8](#)). Weapons were used in a higher proportion of incidents of violence without injury (28%) than incidents of violence with injury (13%). The most commonly used weapon was a knife or other stabbing implement¹ (used in 6% of violent incidents).

For more information on the use of weapons in violent incidents, please see the ‘Offences involving the use of weapons’ chapter of this publication, which contains analysis of police recorded violent crime involving knives and firearms.

Victims sustained a physical injury in 45% of incidents of violence in the year ending March 2016 CSEW. This varied by perpetrator, with 58% of incidents of domestic violence resulting in physical injury compared with 42% of both acquaintance violence and stranger violence incidents. The most common type of weapon used in domestic violence was a stabbing implement (used in 13% of violent incidents). A hitting implement² was the most common (8%) in acquaintance violence and stones were the most common (4%) in stranger violence. A stabbing implement was the most common weapon used for wounding (6%) and for violence without injury (8%).

The most common type of injury in incidents of violence was minor bruising or black eye (27% of incidents). A lower proportion of incidents involved more serious injuries such as broken bones (3%), concussion or loss of consciousness (1%) or a broken nose (1%) ([Nature of Crime Table 3.7](#)).

The survey also asks children about injuries sustained through violence. Based on the year ending March 2016 CSEW, 78% of victims aged 10 to 15 sustained an injury and 21% of victims received some form of medical attention as a result of the violent incident. Of those incidents where the victim aged 10 to 15 sustained an injury, minor bruising or black eye was the most common injury (67%), followed by scratches (28%) and marks on skin (22%). In 7% of violent incidents where the victim aged 10 to 15 sustained an injury, this was a serious injury³ ([Nature of Crime Table 4.6](#)).

Notes for: Use of weapons and injuries in violent crime

1. Includes screwdrivers and other stabbing implements.
2. Includes sticks, clubs and other hitting implements.
3. Serious injury includes facial/head injuries, broken nose, concussion, broken bones.

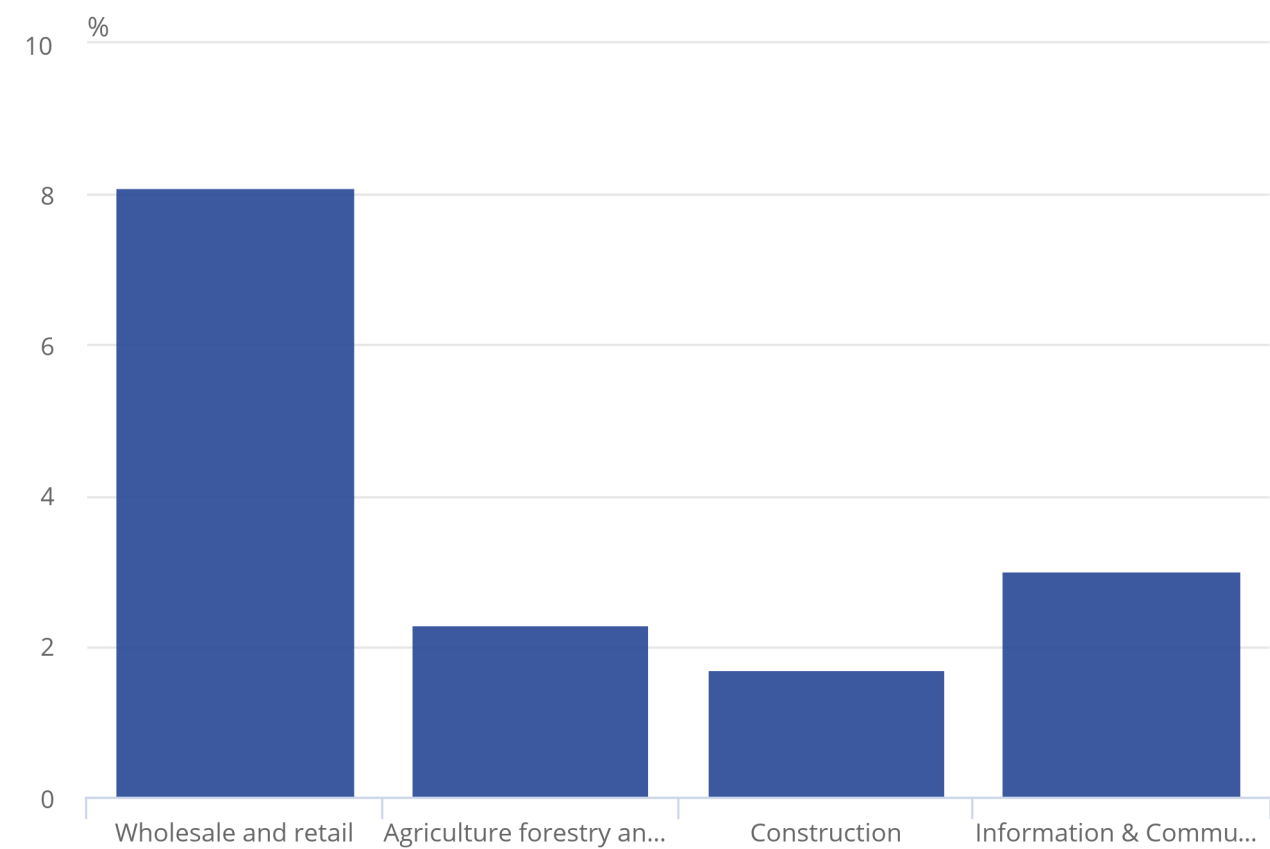
16 . Findings from the 2015 Commercial Victimisation Survey (CVS)

The [2015 CVS](#)^{1,2} examined the extent of crime across 4 business sectors in England and Wales in the previous 12 months³, including, among other crimes, the extent of assaults and threats.

Across the 4 sectors, the wholesale and retail sector experienced the highest number of assaults and threats (401,000) making up 9% of all incidents against this sector. This crime had been experienced by 8% of wholesale and retail premises in the previous 12 months (Figure 1.13). Premises that were victims of assaults and threats experienced a high level of repeat victimisation, with an average of 13 incidents per victimised premises in the 12 months prior to interview.

Figure 1.13: Proportion of premises that experienced assaults and threats in the last 12 months, by industry sector, 2015 Commercial Victimisation Survey England and Wales

Figure 1.13: Proportion of premises that experienced assaults and threats in the last 12 months, by industry sector, 2015 Commercial Victimisation Survey England and Wales



Source: Home Office, 2015 CVS headline tables

Source: Home Office, 2015 CVS headline tables

The information and communication sector experienced a much lower number of assaults and threats (4,000) in the previous 12 months compared with the wholesale and retail sector. Such crimes accounted for 14% of all crimes against the information and communication sector. Within this sector, a smaller proportion of premises experienced assaults and threats (3%) compared with the wholesale and retail sector ([Commercial Victimisation Survey: data tables](#)).

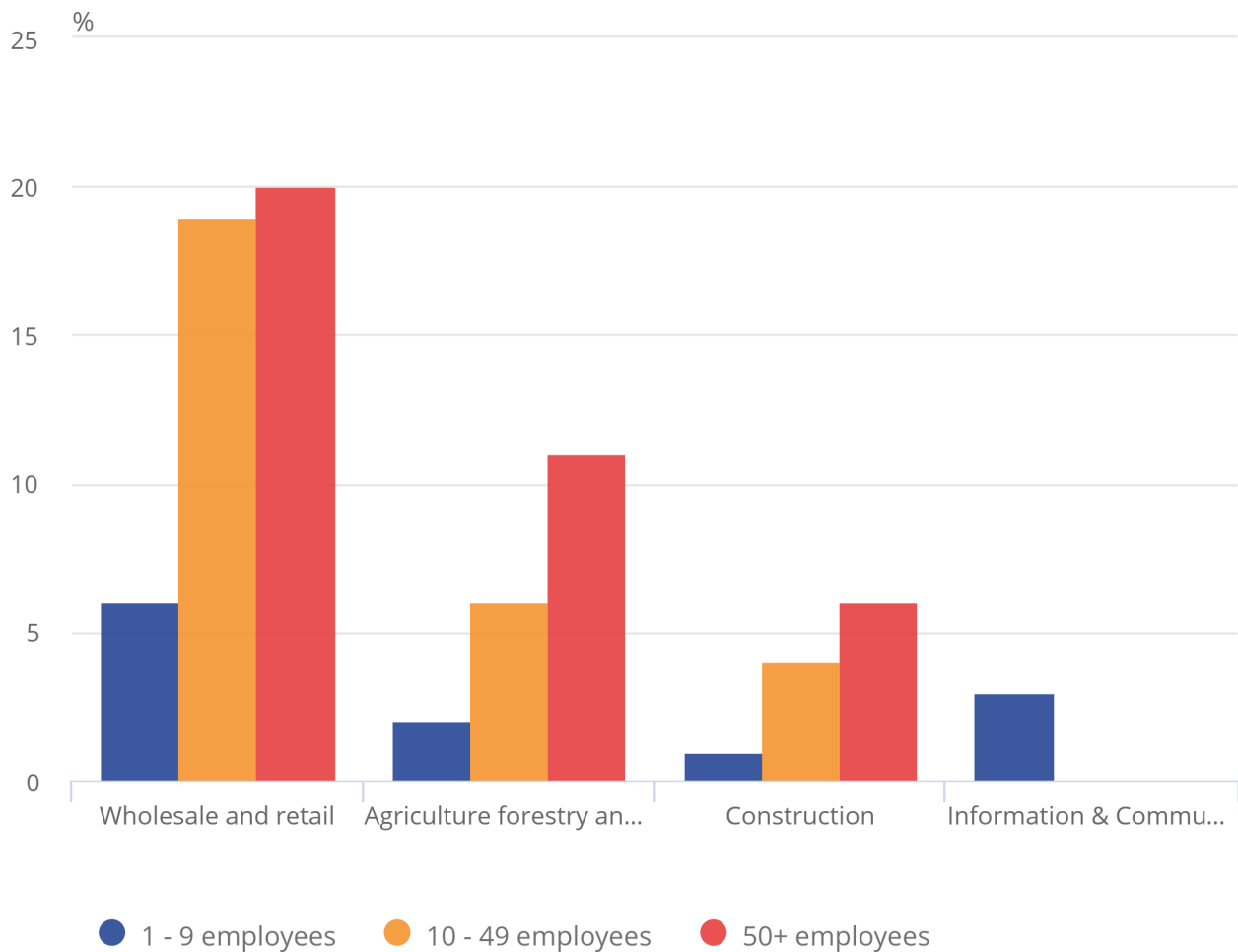
In the construction sector, a lower number of assaults and threats (45,000) were experienced compared with the wholesale and retail sector, but these crimes accounted for almost a third (32%) of all crimes against the construction sector, the largest proportion of all 4 sectors.

The agriculture, forestry and fishing sector had the lowest proportion of premises experiencing assaults and threats (2%, 8,000 incidents) in the 12 months prior to interview. Such crimes accounted for 8% of all crimes against this sector.

The number of assaults and threats experienced per 1,000 premises increased with the size of the premises for all sectors⁴ (Figure 1.14).

Figure 1.14: Proportion of premises that experienced assaults and threats in the last 12 months, by number of employees and sector type, 2015 Commercial Victimisation Survey England and Wales

Figure 1.14: Proportion of premises that experienced assaults and threats in the last 12 months, by number of employees and sector type, 2015 Commercial Victimisation Survey England and Wales



Source: Home Office, 2015 CVS Headline Tables

Source: Home Office, 2015 CVS Headline Tables

Notes:

1. There were no respondents in 10 - 49 and 50+ employee premises for the Information and Communication sector.

Notes for: Findings from the 2015 Commercial Victimisation Survey (CVS)

1. Some of the offences covered in the CVS could also be picked up by the CSEW estimates and police recorded crime.
2. Results from the 2016 CVS will be published in May 2017.
3. The CVS is a telephone interview, for which the 2015 survey was based on 3,204 interviews with respondents at premises in the 4 industry sectors of wholesale and retail; construction; information and communication; and agriculture, forestry and fishing. Nearly half of these interviews were with respondents from the wholesale and retail sector. Between them, these 4 sectors accounted for just over two-fifths of all business premises in England and Wales in 2015.
4. Except information and communications as there were no respondents in the larger premises in this sector.

17 . Annex 1 – Drivers of the increase in police recorded violent crime

The 65% increase in police recorded violent crime between the years ending March 2013 and March 2016 has been largely driven by the police response to findings of 2 recent HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) inspections.

Firstly, the [Crime-recording: making the victim count](#) report published by HMIC found that violence against the person offences had the highest under-recording rates across police forces in England and Wales. Action taken by police forces to improve their compliance with the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) given the renewed focus on the accuracy of crime recording has resulted in an increase in the number of offences recorded. For more information see the 'Accuracy of the statistics' section in the statistical bulletin, [Crime in England and Wales, year ending March 2016](#).

Secondly, it is likely that there has been an increase in the reporting of domestic abuse and subsequent recording of these offences by the police, as a result of an improved response by police to domestic abuse following a [HMIC inspection](#) in 2013 on the handling of domestic abuse incidents. The 2015 HMIC report, [Increasingly everyone's business: A progress report on the police response to domestic abuse](#) found there was an increased focus among police forces to developing evidence-led prosecutions around domestic abuse. The report also found that response officers now have a greater awareness of the importance of collecting evidence at the scene (for example, using body-worn cameras) so that prosecutions can continue even if the victim does not support further action.

The renewed focus on the quality of crime recording means that caution is needed when interpreting statistics on police recorded crime. While we know that it is likely that improvements in compliance with the NCRS have led to increases in the number of crimes recorded by the police (for example, violent crime and sexual offences), it is not possible to quantify the scale of this or assess how this effect and timing of improvements varied between different police forces.

Increases in police force area data may reflect a number of factors including improved recording practice¹, increases in reporting by victims and also possibly some genuine increases in the levels of crime in some police forces.

Notes for: Annex 1 – Drivers of the increase in police recorded violent crime

1. For further information on possible explanations of increasing police recorded crime levels see Chapter 3 of the [User Guide](#).

Homicide

This chapter presents analyses of information held within the Home Office Homicide Index, which contains detailed record-level information about each homicide recorded by police in England and Wales. The database is continually updated with revised information from the police and the courts and, as such, is a richer source of data than the main recorded crime dataset.



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Release date:
9 February 2017

Next release:
To be announced

Correction

15 March 2017

A small error has been found in Figure 2.2 where the data point for the year ending March 2005 was missing, due to a processing error.

This has now been corrected. We apologise for any inconvenience.

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1 . Main points

There were 571 homicides (murder, manslaughter and infanticide) in the year ending March 2016 in England and Wales. This represents an increase of 57 offences (11%) from the 514 recorded in the previous year.

The number of homicides has shown a general downward trend over recent years and the 571 recorded was still one of the lowest levels since the late 1980s, despite having increased from the previous year.

There were 9.9 offences of homicide per million population, and the homicide rate for males (13.8 per million population) was more than twice that for females (6.0 per million population).

Women were far more likely than men to be killed by partners or ex-partners (44% of female victims compared with 7% of male victims), and men were more likely than women to be killed by friends or acquaintances (35% of male victims compared with 13% of female victims).

There were 38 homicide victims aged under 16 years in the year ending March 2016, the lowest number since data on homicide victims by age of victim was first published in 1972.

The most common method of killing continued to be by knife or other sharp instrument with 213 victims killed in this way, accounting for over 1 in 3 (37%) homicides.

The 26 homicide victims (5% of the total) that were killed by shooting showed an increase of 5 from the previous year, but is otherwise the lowest number since 1980 (19 homicides).

2 . Things you need to know

The term “homicide” covers the offences of murder, manslaughter and infanticide¹. Murder and manslaughter are common law offences that have never been defined by statute, although they have been modified by statute. In this bulletin the manslaughter category includes the offence of corporate manslaughter which was created by the [Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007](#) which came into force on 6 April 2008. The offence of infanticide was created by the Infanticide Act 1922 and refined by the [Infanticide Act 1938](#) (section 1).

Data presented in this chapter have been extracted from the Home Office Homicide Index which contains detailed record-level information about each homicide recorded by police in England and Wales. It is continually updated with revised information from the police and the courts and, as such, is a richer source of data than the main recorded crime dataset².

In accordance with the [Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007](#), statistics based on the Home Office Homicide Index have been re-assessed against the Code of Practice for Official Statistics and found to meet the required standard for designation as National Statistics. The letter of confirmation can be found on the [UK Statistics Authority](#) website. Further information on the interpretation of recorded crime data is provided in the [User Guide](#).

Homicide Index data are based on the year when the offence was recorded as a crime, not when the offence took place or when the case was heard in court. While in the vast majority of cases the offence will be recorded in the same year as it took place, this is not always the case. Caution is therefore needed when looking at longer-term homicide trend figures. For example, the 172 homicides attributed to Dr Harold Shipman as a result of Dame Janet Smith's inquiry took place over a long period of time but were all recorded by the police during the year ending March 2003. Also, where several people are killed by the same suspect, the number of homicides counted is the total number of victims killed rather than the number of incidents. For example, the victims of the Cumbrian shootings committed by Derrick Bird on 2 June 2010 are counted as 12 homicides rather than one incident in the year ending March 2011 data.

The data refer to the position as at 14 November 2016, when the Homicide Index database was "frozen" for the purpose of analysis³. The data will change as subsequent court hearings take place or as other information is received.

The circumstances surrounding a homicide may be complex and it can take time for cases to pass through the criminal justice system (CJS). Due to this, the percentage of homicides recorded in the year ending March 2016 (and, to a lesser extent, those recorded in earlier years) that have concluded at Crown Court is likely to show an increase when the next figures from the Homicide Index are published in 12 months' time. Conversely, the proportion of cases without suspects or with court proceedings pending is expected to decrease as police complete more investigations and as cases pass through the CJS (see What do we know about suspects section for further details).

During 2016, an exercise was carried out with the National Confidential Inquiry at the University of Manchester and Greater Manchester Police to update the Homicide Index with missing CJS outcomes. This has led to a decrease in the number of homicide cases for the year ending March 2005 to the year ending March 2015 with pending or in progress cases, and a corresponding increase in final outcomes. In addition, collaboration with analysts at the National Offender Management Service at the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) enabled life sentence information to be completed for a number of cases with missing outcomes.

For the purposes of the Homicide Index, a suspect in a homicide case is defined as:

- (i) A person who has been arrested in respect of an offence initially classified as homicide⁴ and charged with homicide, including those who were subsequently convicted; or
- (ii) A person who is suspected by the police of having committed the offence but is known to have died or committed suicide prior to arrest/being charged.

Where there are multiple suspects in a homicide case they are categorised in the Homicide Index as either the principal or a secondary suspect. There is only ever one principal suspect per homicide victim. If there is any conviction information available then the suspect with the longest sentence or most serious conviction is determined to be the principal suspect. In the absence of any court outcome, the principal suspect is either the person considered by the police to be the most involved in the homicide or the suspect with the closest relationship to the victim.

As more than one person can be convicted for a single homicide, the number of people convicted will not necessarily be the same as the number of victims recorded. However, if the outcome of only the principal suspect in each case is examined (that is, one suspect per victim), this can provide a more direct comparison to the case outcome of each homicide.

Notes for: Things you need to know

1. Infanticide is defined as the killing of a baby under 1-year-old by their mother while the balance of her mind was disturbed as a result of giving birth.
2. For example, when the police initially record an offence as a homicide it remains classified as such unless the police or courts decide that a lesser offence, or no offence, took place. The offence would be reclassified on the Homicide Index as “no longer recorded” but remain in the main police recorded crime collection as a homicide.
3. The Homicide Index is continually updated with revised information from the police as investigations continue and as cases are heard by the courts. The version used for analysis does not accept updates after it is “frozen” to ensure the data do not change during the analysis period. See Section 3.1 of the [User Guide](#) for more information.
4. The homicide may no longer be recorded as such if all the suspects were acquitted.

3 . What does the long-term trend in homicide look like?

When the police initially record an offence as a homicide it remains classified as such unless the police or courts decide that a lesser offence, or no offence, took place. In all, 577 deaths were initially recorded as homicides by the police in the year ending March 2016 and by 14 November 2016, 6 were no longer recorded as homicides ¹, giving a total of 571 offences currently recorded as homicides.

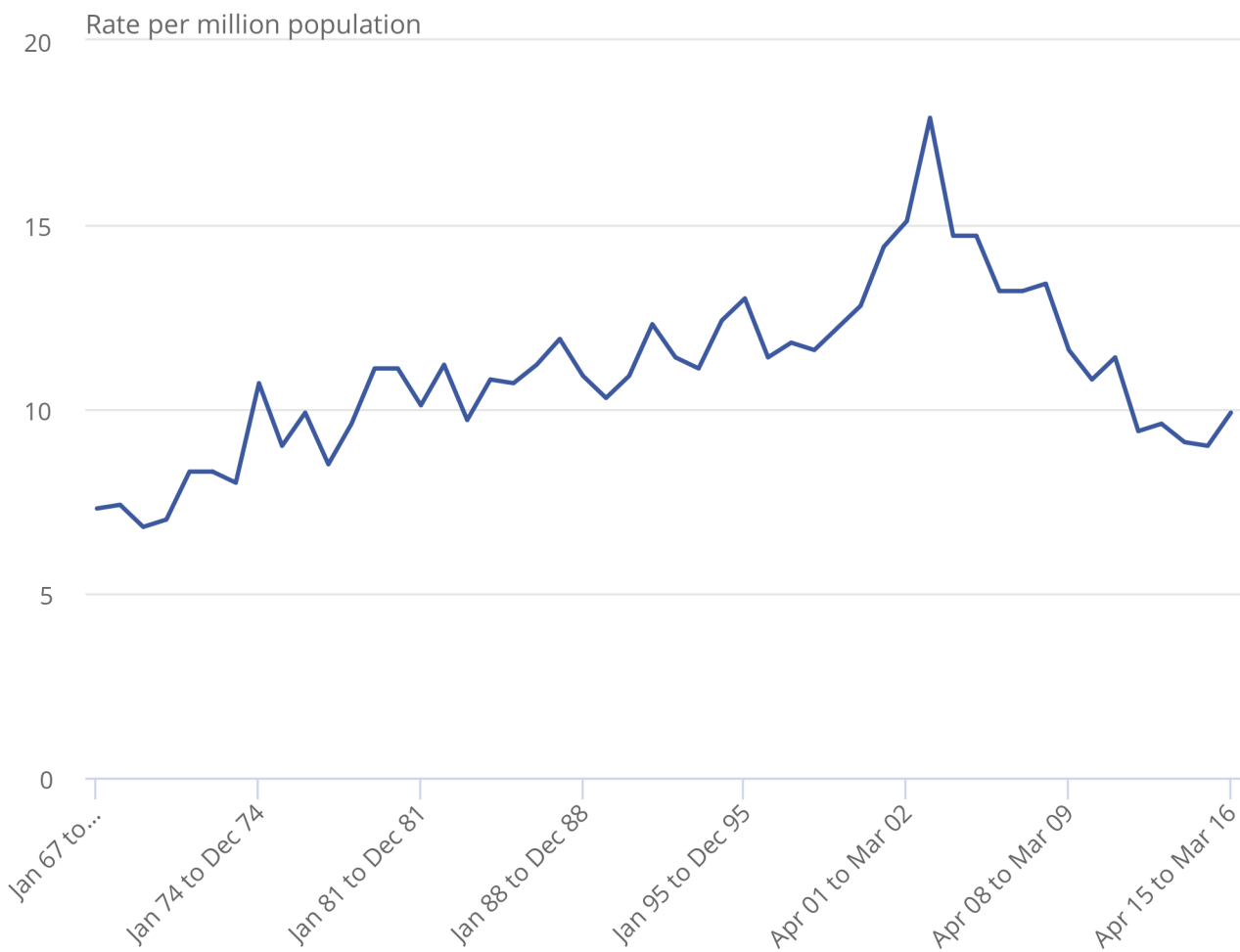
The 571 offences recorded as homicide in the year ending March 2016 represents an increase of 57 offences (11%) from the 514 recorded for the previous year, but is still one of the lowest levels since the late 1980s.

Homicides generally increased from the 1960s up to the early 2000s (the peak of 944 in the year ending March 2003 includes 172 homicides committed by Dr Harold Shipman). There was then a general downward trend to the year ending March 2015.

To put the actual number of homicides in context, incidence rates show the volume of offences as a proportion of the resident population. The incidence rate for homicide remains relatively low, with 9.9 homicides recorded per million population during the year ending March 2016, higher than the rate for the last 4 years but still one of the lowest homicide rates since the late 1970s. If the 172 homicides committed by Harold Shipman recorded in the year ending March 2003 are excluded from the analysis, homicide rates peaked in the year ending March 2002, at 15.1 offences per million population² (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Incidence rate per million population for homicide offences currently recorded by the police in England and Wales, year ending December 1967 to year ending March 2016

Figure 2.1: Incidence rate per million population for homicide offences currently recorded by the police in England and Wales, year ending December 1967 to year ending March 2016



Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Notes:

1. Year ending December 1987 includes 15 victims of Michael Ryan.
2. Year ending March 2001 includes 58 Chinese nationals who suffocated in a lorry en route into the UK.
3. Year ending March 2003 includes 172 victims of Dr Harold Shipman.
4. Year ending March 2004 includes 20 cockle pickers who drowned in Morecambe Bay.
5. Year ending March 2006 includes 52 victims of the 7 July London bombings.
6. Year ending March 2011 includes 12 victims of Derrick Bird.

More up-to-date figures on homicide from the main recorded crime return are published as part of the quarterly [ONS Crime Statistics in England and Wales series](#).

Compared with other offences, homicides are relatively low-volume, and year-on-year variations need to be interpreted with some caution. However, an analysis of trends (discussed in the Statistical interpretation of trends in homicides section of this chapter) shows the number of homicide incidents recorded in the year ending March 2016 was not statistically significantly different at the 95% level than the previous 7 years.

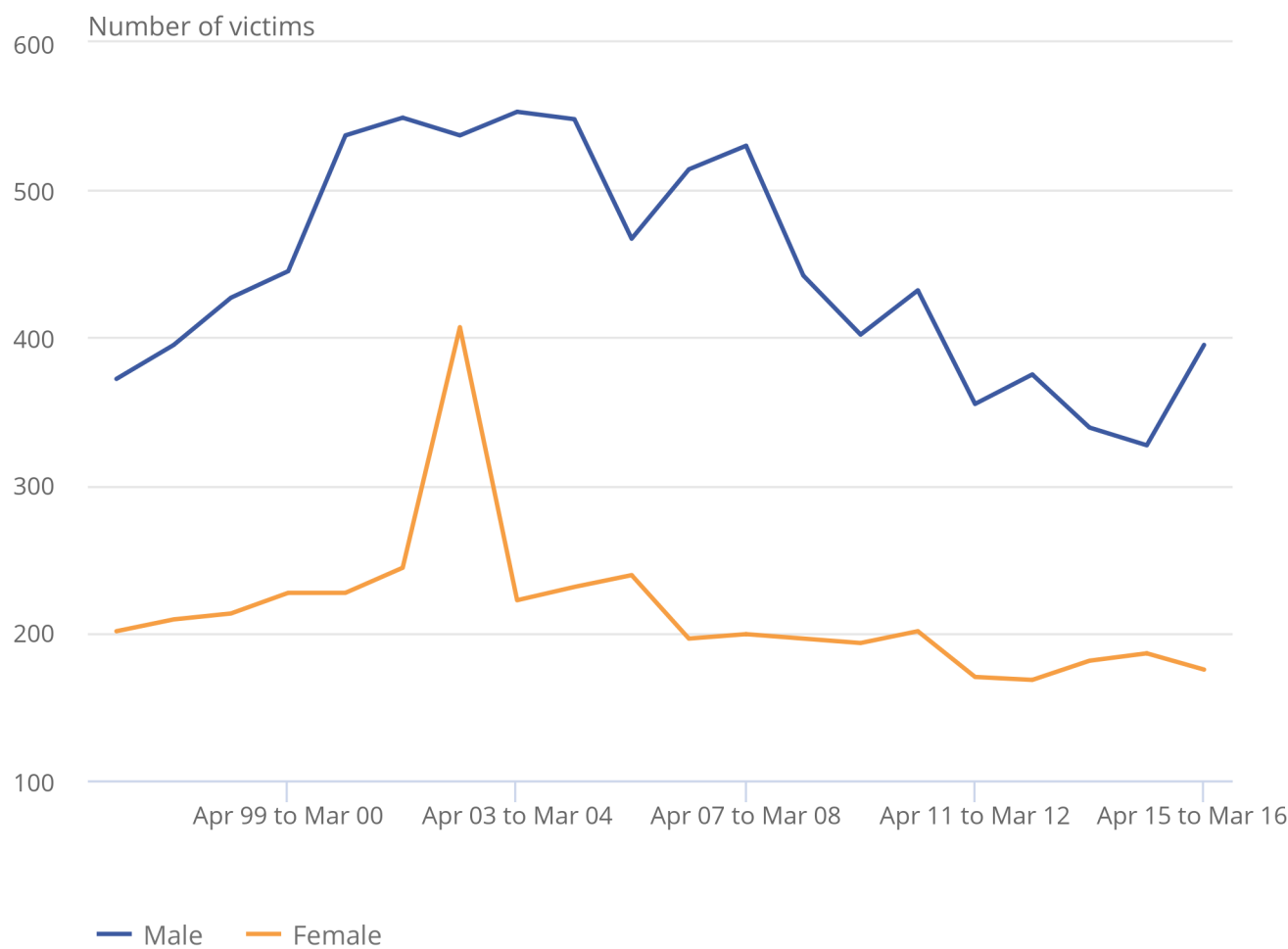
4 . How do homicide rates vary across the population?

In the year ending March 2016, around 7 in 10 homicide victims were male (69%, 395 victims) and 3 in 10 were female (31%, 175 victims). This is similar to the sex of victims over the last decade, with the exception of the previous 2 years, when 64% to 65% of victims were male.

The number of male victims of homicide (395) increased 21% from 327 in the previous year, ending a generally downward trend. In contrast, the number of female homicide victims decreased slightly, from 186 to 175 victims (a 6% decrease), continuing the longer-term gradual downward trend (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2: Homicide offences currently recorded by the police in England and Wales by sex of victim, year ending March 1997 to year ending March 2016

Figure 2.2: Homicide offences currently recorded by the police in England and Wales by sex of victim, year ending March 1997 to year ending March 2016



Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Notes:

- 1. Year ending March 2003 includes 42 male and 130 female victims of Dr Harold Shipman.
- 2. Year ending March 2012 includes 1 victim with unknown gender.
- 3. Year ending March 2015 includes 1 victim with unknown gender.
- 4. Year ending March 2016 includes 1 victim with unknown gender.

The homicide rate for males (13.8 per million population) was more than twice that for females (6.0 per million population), a pattern that is consistent with previous years ([Appendix Table 2.02](#)). However, it should be noted that the nature of homicides differs between men and women, as discussed in the How are victims and suspects related? section of this chapter.

In the year ending March 2016, there were 38 homicide victims under 16 years of age, compared with 56 victims in the previous year and 44 in the year ending March 2014. This was the lowest number since data on homicide victims by age of victim was first published in 1972.

There were increases from the previous year in the number of homicide victims in all the male adult age groups, but it was particularly marked among males aged 25- to 34-years-old (up 43%) and males aged 75 and over (up 71%). However following a low figure for the year ending March 2015 (54 males in the 25 to 34 age groups), the number for the year ending March 2016 (77) has returned to the levels seen in previous years ([Appendix Table 2.02](#)).

Children under the age of 1 have the highest rate of homicide (22 per million population) along with males aged 16 to 44 (20 per million population).

Of the 571 offences recorded as homicide in the year ending March 2016, 7% involved victims under the age of 16, lower than the proportion in the year ending March 2015 (11%, [Appendix Table 2.02](#)). Just under a half (47%) of victims aged under 16 were male, and 53% were female. In comparison, 56% of victims aged 75 and over were male, and around two-thirds or more of victims in other age groups were male.

5 . What methods of killing are used?

As in previous years, the most common method of killing for both male and female victims was by a knife or other sharp instrument, with 213 such homicides (37% of the total) recorded in the year ending March 2016 ([Appendix Table 2.03](#)). Although the absolute number of homicides committed by knives or sharp instruments has risen from 186 in the previous year, the proportion of homicides committed by this method remains similar (36% for the year ending March 2015).

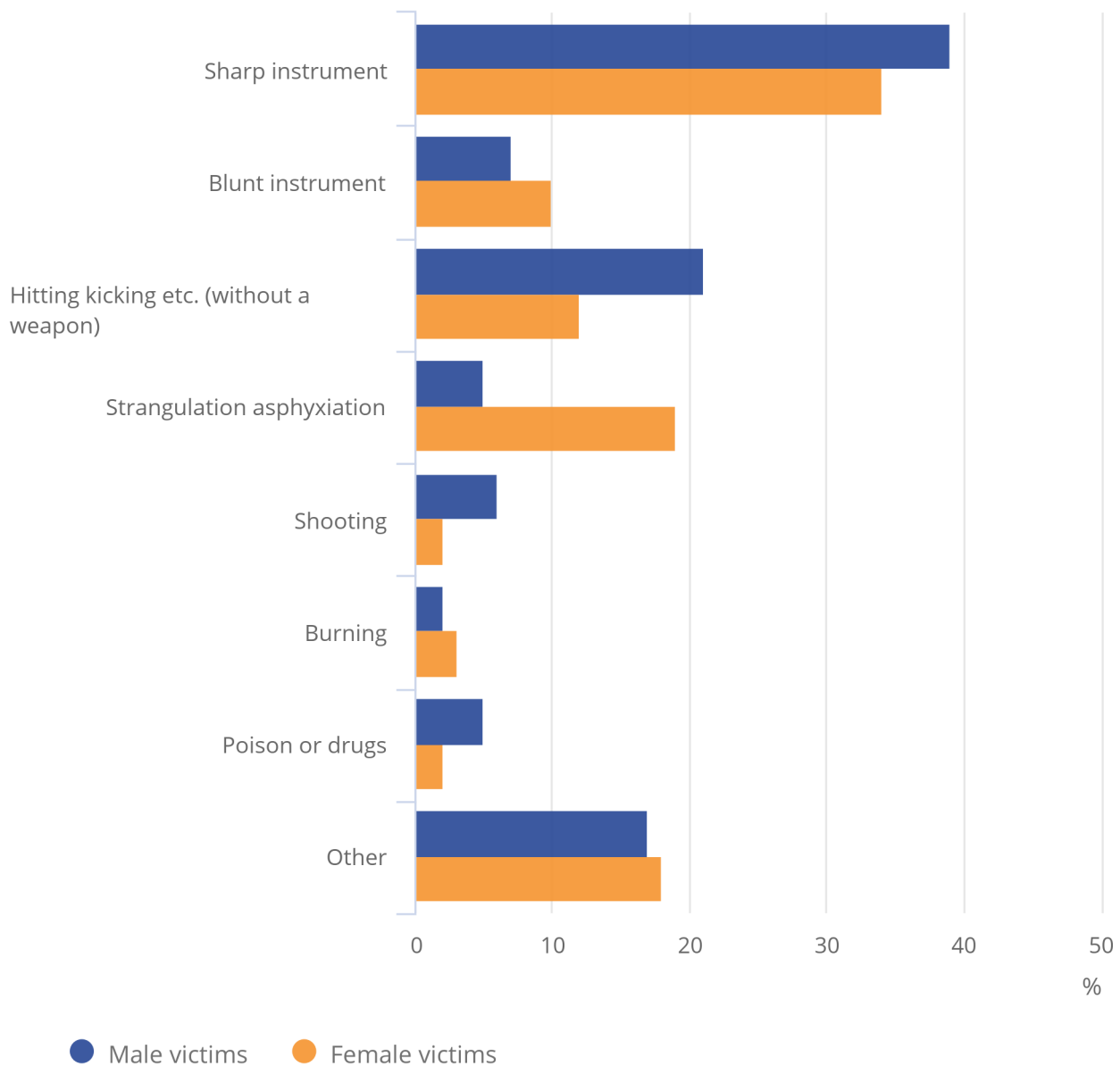
The second most common method of killing was “kicking or hitting”, accounting for 102 homicides (18% of the total), a proportion that has remained roughly a fifth over the last decade. The majority (79%) of those killed in this way were male victims.

In total, 26 homicide victims were killed by shooting, and although this was 5 more than the previous year it was one of the lowest numbers since 1980 (19 homicides).

Similar proportions of male and female victims were killed by a sharp instrument or by a blunt instrument but there were differences between the sexes in other methods (Figure 2.3). For example, while hitting and kicking was the second most common method for male victims (81 homicides), for female victims it was strangulation or asphyxiation (33 homicides). Differences in methods of killing by sex of victim tend to reflect differences in victim to suspect relationships as discussed in the How are victims and suspects related? section of this chapter.

Figure 2.3: Offences currently recorded as homicide by apparent method of killing and sex of victim, year ending March 2016

Figure 2.3: Offences currently recorded as homicide by apparent method of killing and sex of victim, year ending March 2016



Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Notes:

1. 'Other' includes all other apparent methods and where method is unknown.

Use of licensed firearms

Information on homicides where there was a licensed firearm used has previously been published on an ad hoc basis, but is now included in this publication for the first time. It should be noted that the proportion of firearm homicides carried out with licensed firearms is relatively small in volume and subject to large fluctuations from year to year, especially if there are multiple homicides, such as the Derrick Bird shootings in June 2010.

There were 26 homicides involving a firearm in the year ending March 2016, and in only 1 of these cases was the firearm known to be licensed. In 18 homicides the firearm was not licensed, and in the remaining 7 homicides it was not known if the firearm was licensed or not ([Appendix Table 2.04](#)).

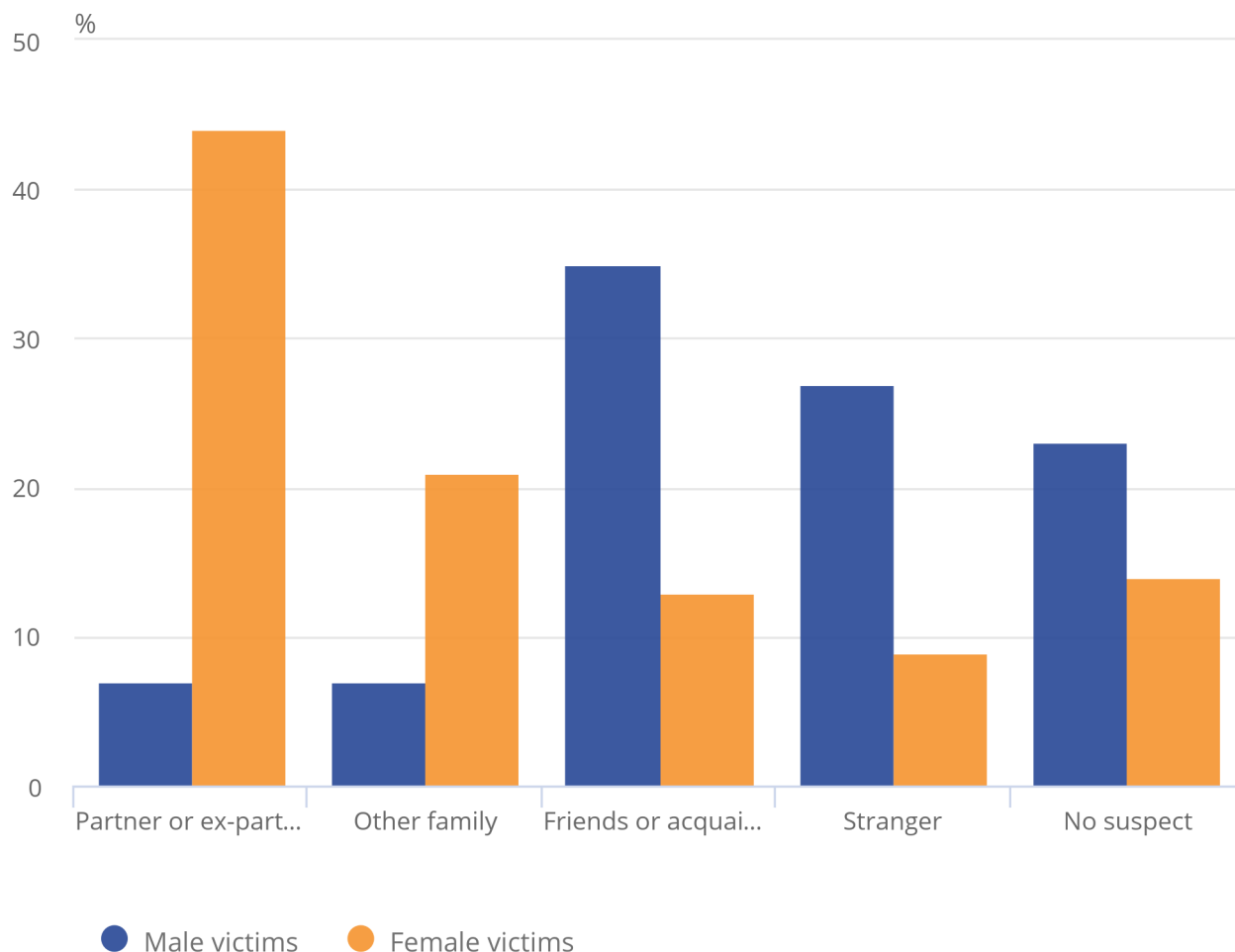
6 . How are victims and suspects related?

Data on the relationship of victims to principal suspects for the year ending March 2016 show findings consistent with previous years, with differences between males and females. Female victims (77%) were more likely than male victims (50%) to have been acquainted with the principal suspect ([Appendix Table 2.05](#); Figure 2.4)¹. In particular, women were far more likely to be killed by partners or ex-partners (44% of female victims compared with 7% of male victims). In contrast, men were far more likely to be killed by friends or acquaintances (35% of male victims and 13% of female victims) or strangers (27% of male victims compared with 9% of female victims).

The percentage of male victims with no suspect identified is higher than for previous years (23%), but this figure is likely to fall as police continue their investigations.

Figure 2.4: Relationship of homicide victims to principal suspect by sex of victim, year ending March 2016

Figure 2.4: Relationship of homicide victims to principal suspect by sex of victim, year ending March 2016



Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

To account for differences by age in the relationships between victims and principal suspects, the analysis in the next 2 sections reports on adult victims (those aged 16 and over) and child victims (those aged under 16) separately.

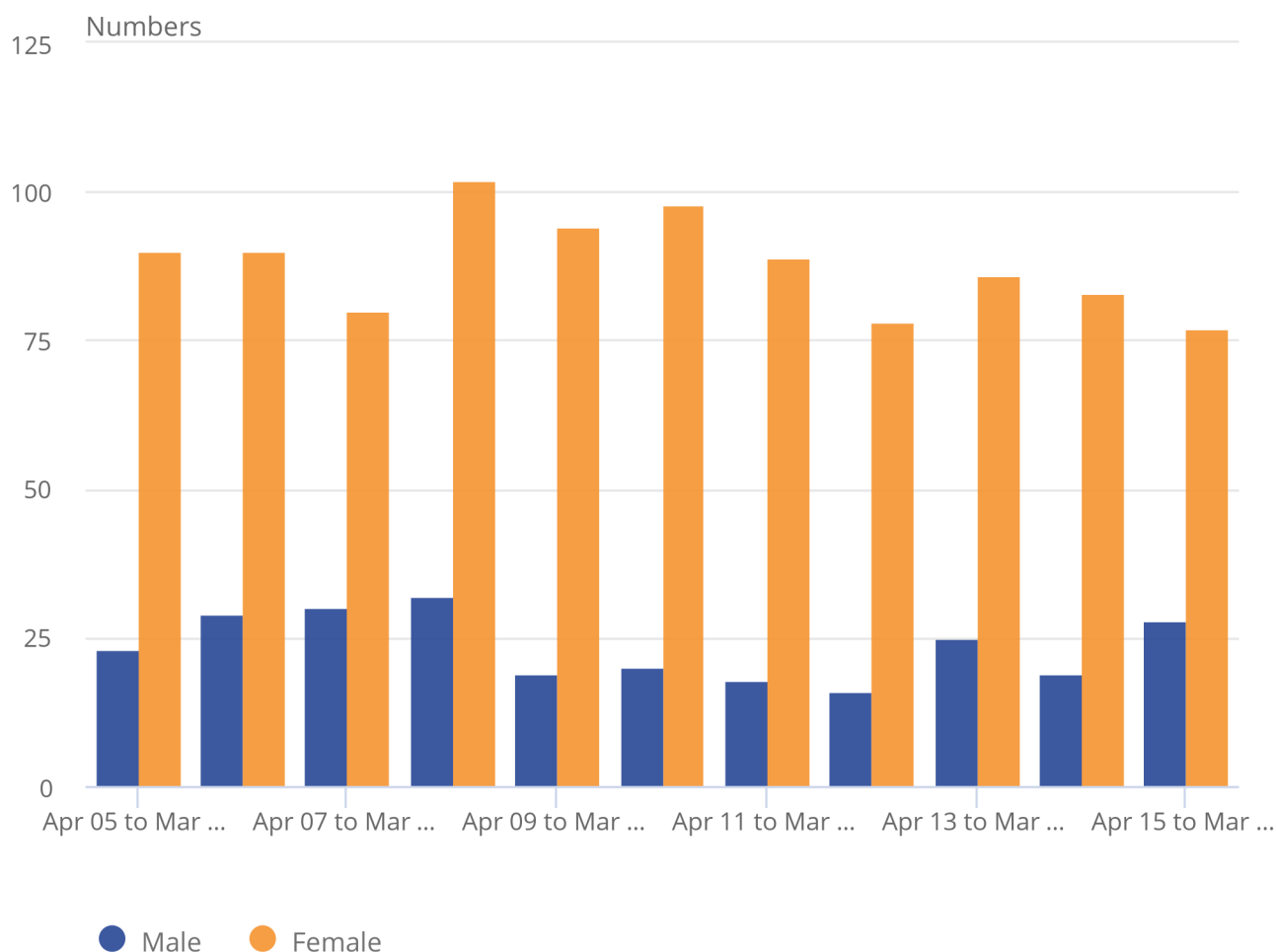
Adult victims

There were large differences in the victim-suspect relationship between men and women. In the year ending March 2016, a half (50%) of female victims aged 16 or over were killed by their partner or ex-partner² (77 offences). This is similar to the previous year (51%) but lower than years prior to that, continuing a general downward trend since the year ending March 2009.

In contrast, only 7% of male victims aged 16 or over were killed by their partner or ex-partner in the year ending March 2016 (28 offences), a percentage that is similar to previous years ([Appendix Table 2.06b](#), Figure 2.5).

Figure 2.5: Number of homicide victims aged 16 and over killed by partner or ex-partner, by sex of victim, year ending March 2006 to year ending March 2016

Figure 2.5: Number of homicide victims aged 16 and over killed by partner or ex-partner, by sex of victim, year ending March 2006 to year ending March 2016



Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Over one-third of adult male victims (138 victims, 37%) were killed by a friend or acquaintance (a lower proportion than that found in previous years, although there is some fluctuation in the series). Female adult victims were less likely to be killed by a friend or acquaintance (14% of homicides, 22 offences).

Around 3 in 10 adult male victims (106 males, 28%) were killed by strangers, compared with around 1 in 11 female victims (14 females, 9%).

Child victims

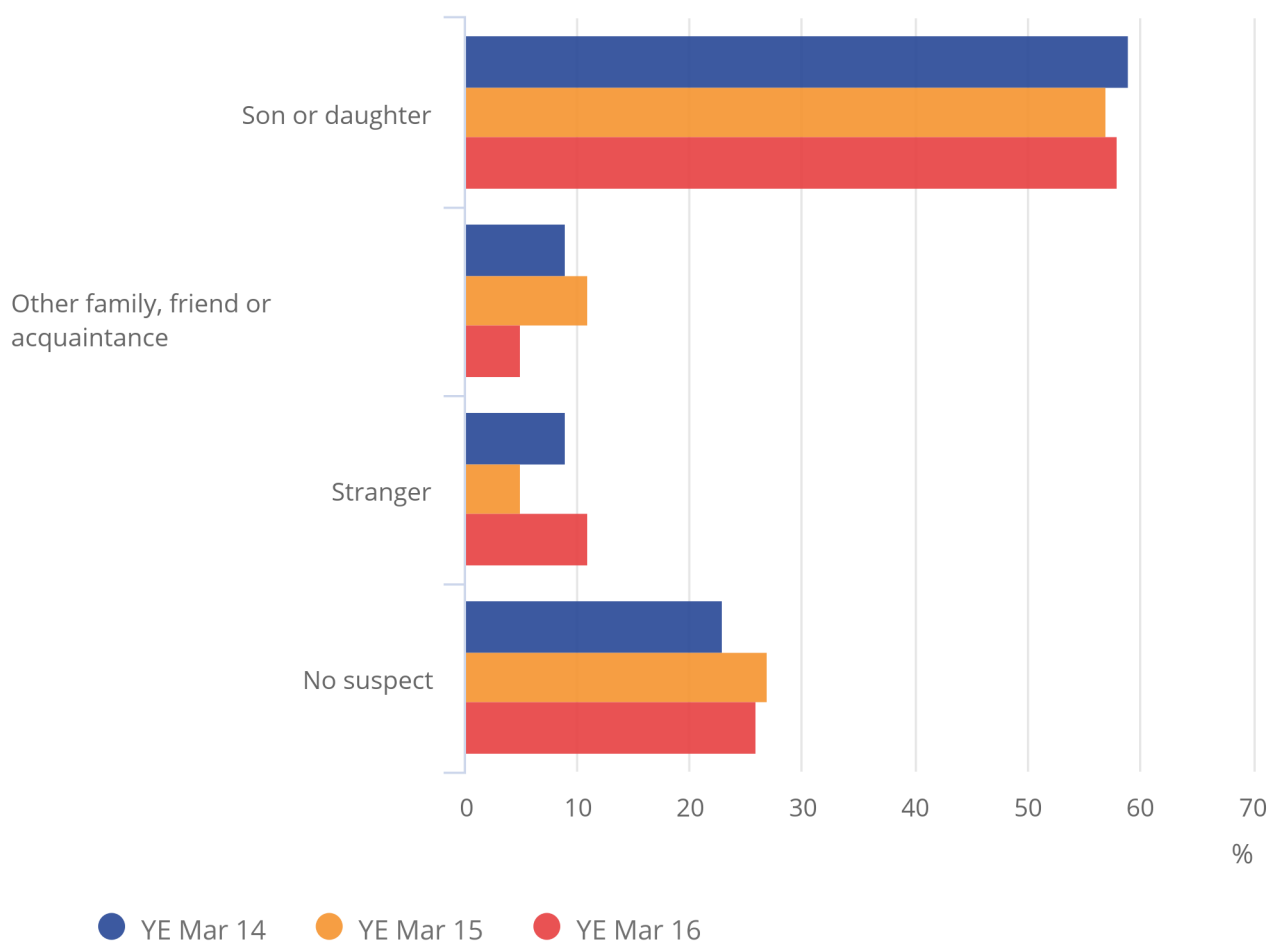
As in previous years, the majority of victims aged under 16 were acquainted with the principal suspect (63%, 24 offences), and in all but 2 of these cases they were killed by a parent or step-parent (Figure 2.6).

Proportionally few homicides of those aged under 16 were committed by strangers. The victim was known to have been killed by a stranger in 4 offences in the year ending March 2016 (11%). This number has varied between 1 and 9 victims in each year over the last decade.

As of 14 November 2016, there were 10 victims aged under 16 (26%) for whom no suspect had been identified, a higher proportion than among adult victims (20%). This number is likely to fall as police investigations continue.

Figure 2.6: Homicide victims under 16 years of age, by relationship of victim to principal suspect, year ending March 2014 to year ending March 2016

Figure 2.6: Homicide victims under 16 years of age, by relationship of victim to principal suspect, year ending March 2014 to year ending March 2016



Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Notes:

1. Figures are likely to change as cases progress through the courts and more information becomes available.
2. YE= year ending

Notes for: How are victims and suspects related?

1. The relationship between victim and principal suspect is not always known and, for the purposes of this analysis, such cases have been included in the “stranger” category. Stranger category includes: police or prison officer killed in the course of duty, stranger (terrorist or contract killing and other) and where there is insufficient information about the suspect to determine relationship to victim.
2. Partner or ex-partner includes the sub-categories “spouse, cohabiting partner, boyfriend or girlfriend, ex-spouse or ex-cohabiting partner, ex-boyfriend or girlfriend, adulterous relationship, lover’s spouse or emotional rival”.

7 . What do we know about the circumstances and location of homicides?

Circumstances of homicides

Similar to previous years, the latest figures show about a half (49%, or 277 offences) of all homicide cases resulted from a quarrel, a revenge attack or a loss of temper. This proportion was higher where the principal suspect was known to the victim (57%), compared with when the suspect was unknown to the victim (37%).

Irrational acts accounted for 6% of homicides (32 offences)¹, and 4% of homicides (23 offences) occurred during furtherance of theft or gain. As at 14 November 2016, the apparent circumstances were not known for 20% of homicides (116 offences) recorded in the year ending March 2016 ([Appendix Table 2.08](#)). This figure is likely to decrease as the police carry out further investigations.

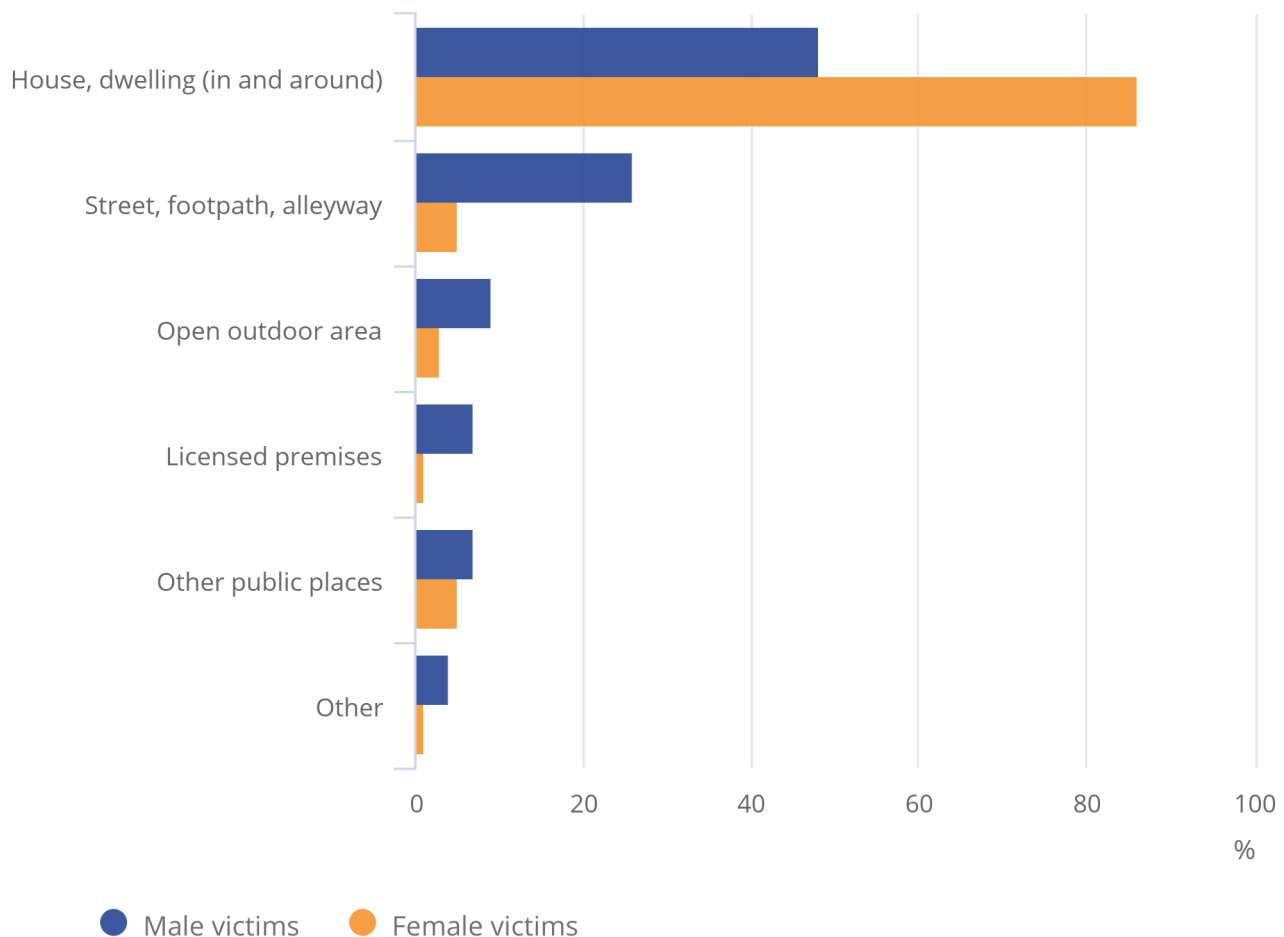
Location of homicides

Over a half (56%, or 321 offences) of all homicide cases occurred in a house or a dwelling. Around a fifth (19% of homicides, 109 offences) occurred in a street, footpath or alleyway and 7% took place in an open outdoor area (39 offences)².

The pattern was different for males and females, reflecting differing victim-suspect relationships ([Appendix Table 2.09](#), Figure 2.7). The majority of female homicides (86%, 151 offences) took place in or around a house or dwelling or residential home compared with 48% of male homicides (191 offences). Around a quarter (26%) of male homicides took place in a street, path or alleyway (101 offences) compared with only 5% of female homicides (8 offences).

Figure 2.7: Offences currently recorded as homicide by location of homicide and sex of victim, year ending March 2016

Figure 2.7: Offences currently recorded as homicide by location of homicide and sex of victim, year ending March 2016



Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Notes:

1. 'House, dwelling (in and around)' includes residential homes.
2. 'Other' includes all other locations including unknown.

Notes on: What do we know about the circumstances and location of homicides?

1. These figures for irrational acts do not account for all homicides committed by mentally disturbed people, as offences with an apparent motive (for example, during a quarrel or robbery) are instead included under the respective circumstance. Higher overall totals for homicides committed by mentally disturbed people are quoted elsewhere ([National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Homicide by People with Mental Illness](#)).
2. "Open outdoor area" here includes the category from the Homicide Index and car parks.

8 . How many homicide cases have criminal justice system (CJS) outcomes?

Of the 571 cases currently recorded as homicide in the year ending March 2016, data on the case outcomes of the principal suspects at 14 November 2016 showed ([Appendix Table 2.10](#)):

- court proceedings had resulted in homicide convictions in 224 cases (39%)
- court proceedings were pending for 170 cases (30%)
- no suspects had been charged in connection with 119 cases (21%)
- suspects had committed suicide in 27 cases (5%)
- proceedings had been discontinued or not initiated or all suspects had been acquitted in 26 cases (5%)

These figures are similar to those published last year for the [year ending March 2015](#).

9 . What do we know about suspects?

More than one suspect may be charged per homicide victim and in some cases no suspect is ever charged (Table 2.1). Due to this, the number of suspects is not the same as the number of offences. It should also be noted that the number of cases with no suspect will reduce as the police continue their investigations.

Table 2.1: Number of suspects for initially recorded homicide victims, year ending March 2013 to year ending March 2016

England and Wales

	Apr '12 to Mar '13	Apr '13 to Mar '14	Apr '14 to Mar '15	Apr '15 to Mar '16	Apr '12 to Mar '13	Apr '13 to Mar '14	Apr '14 to Mar '15	Apr '15 to Mar '16
	Number				Percentage			
No suspects charged	67	51	90	119	12	9	17	21
One	378	376	350	367	67	70	66	64
Two	73	61	57	48	13	11	11	8
Three or more	47	49	33	43	8	9	6	7
All initially recorded homicides	565	537	530	577	100	100	100	100

Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Notes:

1. As at 14 November 2016; figures are subject to revision as cases are dealt with by the police and by the courts, or as further information becomes available.

In total, there were 611 suspects as at 14 November 2016 relating to the 577 homicides initially recorded in the year ending March 2016 ([Appendix Table 2.12](#)). Of these:

- court proceedings had concluded for 372 suspects (61% of all suspects)
- court proceedings were pending for 212 suspects (35%)
- 25 suspects had committed suicide or died (4%)
- the remaining 2 suspects had no proceedings taken on advice of the Director of Public Prosecutions

For those suspects where proceedings had concluded, 91% were male (318 suspects) and 9% were female (33 suspects).

Among male suspects:

- nearly three-fifths (58%) of those indicted for a homicide offence and with a court outcome were convicted of murder
- just under a quarter (23%) were convicted of manslaughter
- 15% were acquitted or their proceedings were discontinued
- 4% had another outcome¹

For females indicted for homicide with an outcome:

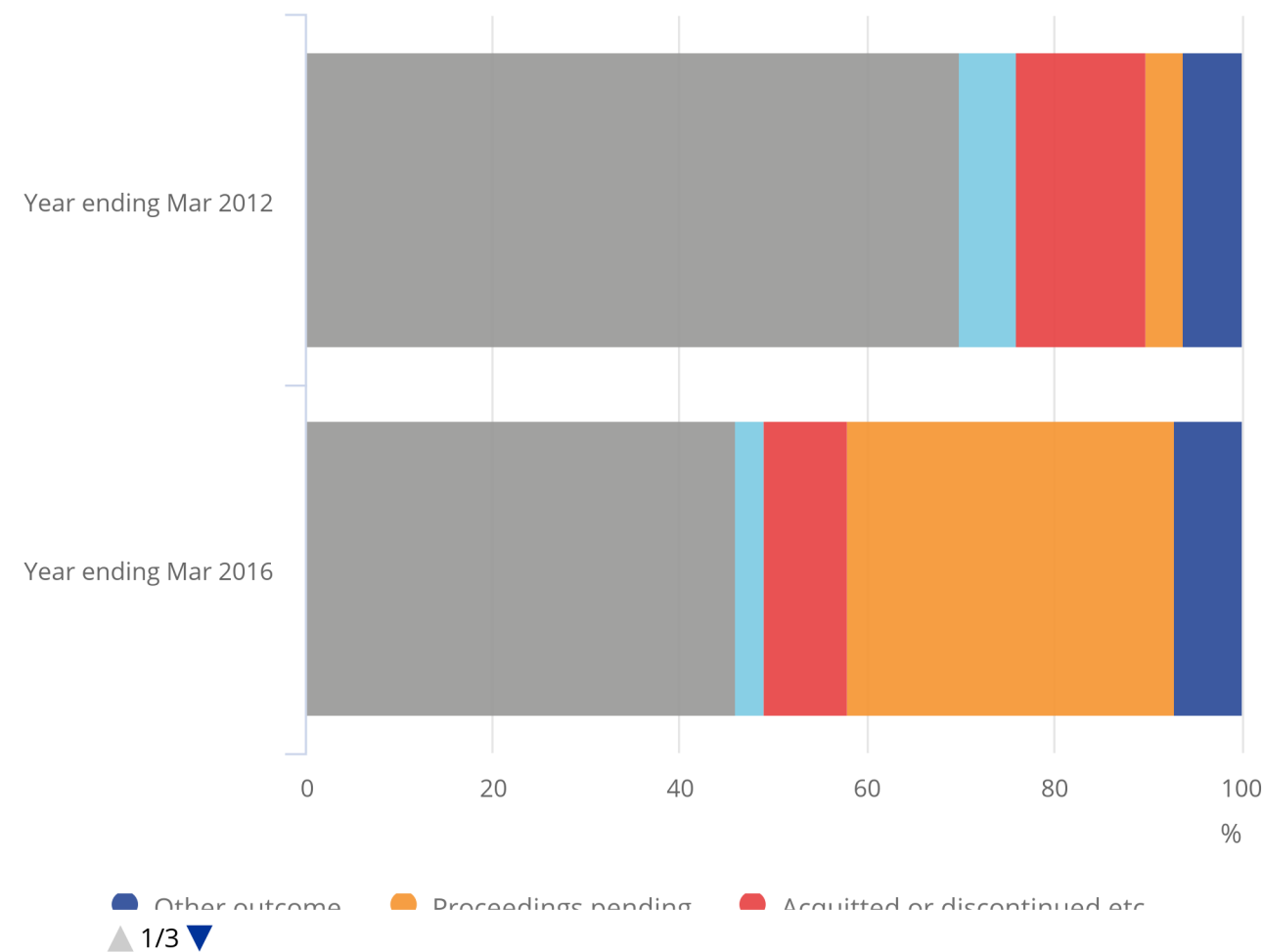
- 61% were convicted of murder
- 21% were convicted of manslaughter 15% were acquitted or had their proceedings discontinued
- 3% were convicted of a lesser offence

In the 3 years from the year ending March 2014 to the year ending March 2016, 82% of suspects indicted for homicide with a court outcome were found guilty of homicide and 13% were acquitted ([Appendix Table 2.13](#)). Similar criminal justice statistics produced by the MoJ in their publication [Criminal justice system statistics quarterly: December 2015](#) show that the conviction ratio (the number of convictions within a given period divided by the number of prosecutions in the same period) for homicide offences in 2015 was 74% ².

The case outcomes for suspects of homicides recorded in the year ending March 2016 (Figure 2.8) are likely to change as cases progress through the CJS and more information becomes available. As such, cases from previous years are more likely to have concluded at court. While court proceedings were pending for 35% of the suspects in homicides recorded in the year ending March 2016, proceedings were pending for only 4% of the cases recorded in the year ending March 2012. Conversely, 46% of the suspects of homicides recorded in the year ending March 2016 had been to court and been convicted of homicide compared with 70% of those recorded in the year ending March 2012.

Figure 2.8: Current outcomes for suspects of homicides recorded in year ending March 2012 and year ending March 2016

Figure 2.8: Current outcomes for suspects of homicides recorded in year ending March 2012 and year ending March 2016



Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Notes:

1. As at 14 November 2016
2. 'Other outcome' includes suspect unfit to plead, proceedings concluded with other outcome, suspect committed suicide or died and the cases where no court proceedings were taken.

Previous homicide convictions

The Homicide Index shows that in the year ending March 2016, there were 2 convictions for homicide offences for suspects who had a previous conviction for homicide. As more cases are concluded at Crown Court, this figure may rise. For homicide offences recorded in the year ending March 2015, there were 4 people convicted of homicide who had a previous conviction for homicide ([Appendix Table 2.15](#)).

For homicide offences recorded between the year ending March 2006 and the year ending March 2016 in total, 47 people who were convicted of a homicide offence had a previous conviction for homicide (less than 1% of all homicide convictions). Of these 47 offences, the second conviction was for murder in 40 cases ([Appendix Table 2.16](#)).

Notes for: What do we know about suspects?

1. "Other outcome" includes suspect unfit to plead, proceedings concluded with other outcome, suspect committed suicide or died and the cases where no court proceedings were taken.
2. It is worth noting that offenders found guilty in a given year may have been proceeded against in previous year. This series has fluctuated between 67% and 88% in the last decade.

10 . International homicide comparisons

A number of international organisations, including Eurostat¹, have attempted to collate international homicide statistics. There are issues surrounding the comparability of international homicide data including:

- different definitions of homicide between countries, although definitions vary less than for some other types of crimes
- differing points in criminal justice systems at which homicides are recorded, for instance, when the offence is discovered or following further investigation or court outcome;
- the figures are for completed homicides (that is, excluding attempted murder) but, in some countries, the police register any death that cannot immediately be attributed to other causes as homicide

Caution should therefore be taken in comparing homicide rates across countries.

Figures published by [Eurostat](#) show that police recorded intentional homicide offences consistently decreased across EU Member States from 2008 to 2014.

The [Scottish government](#) publishes annual homicide figures, and the most recently published report showed there were 57 victims of homicide in Scotland in the year ending March 2016, 5 fewer than the 62 victims in the previous year. This was the lowest number of homicides since 1976, the first year for which comparable data are available.

The [Police Service of Northern Ireland](#) publish monthly figures on homicides, and the financial year trends release shows that there were 21 homicide offences recorded by the police in Northern Ireland in the year ending March 2016, continuing a general downward trend.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) publish a [Global Homicide Handbook](#) which gives a comprehensive overview of intentional homicide across the world. The most recent of these was published in 2014, and showed that the global average homicide rate stands at 62 per million population. Southern Africa and Central America had rates over 4 times higher than that (above 240 victims per million population). Meanwhile, with rates some 5 times lower than the global average, Eastern Asia, Southern Europe and Western Europe were the sub-regions with the lowest homicide rates.

The [Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation](#) published figures showing that the homicide rate in the United States of America in 2015 was 49 per million population.

Notes for: International homicide comparisons

1. Eurostat is the statistical office of the European Union situated in Luxembourg. Its mission is to provide high quality statistics for Europe. While fulfilling its mission, Eurostat promotes the following values: respect and trust, fostering excellence, promoting innovation, service orientation, professional independence.

11 . Statistical interpretation of trends in homicides

The number of homicides recorded by the police fluctuates from year to year and there is interest in knowing the extent to which these fluctuations in the level of homicides represent an indication of a real underlying trend as opposed to random year-to-year variation. Using data for London between April 2004 and March 2007, [London murders: a predictable pattern?](#) found that homicides in London have a predictable level of fluctuation over time, which allowed them to apply statistical techniques for analysis.

It should be noted that the discussion in this section is related to the statistical properties of the data, and it should not be interpreted as saying that small changes in the numbers of homicides are not of concern.

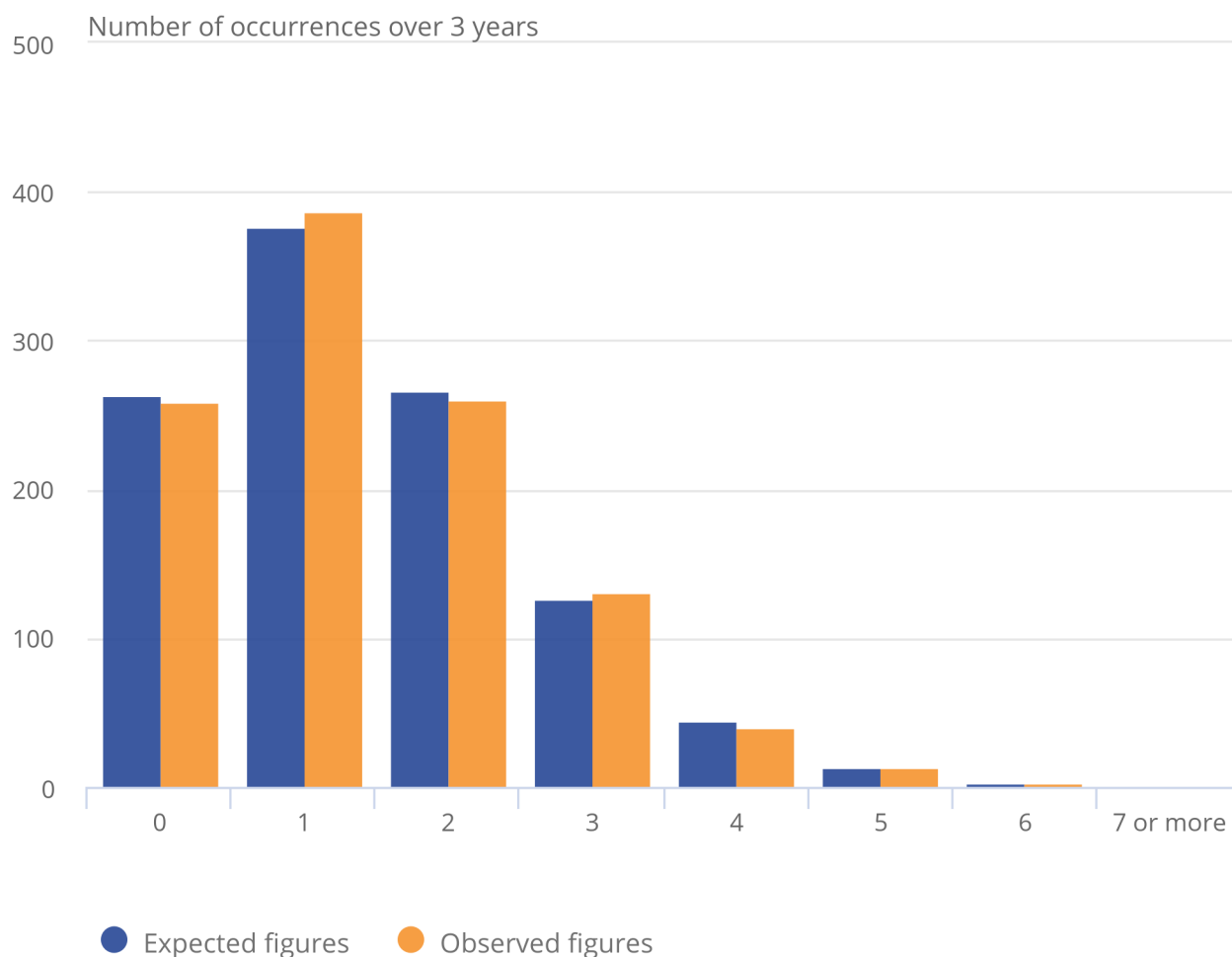
This section presents analyses of homicide incidents, defined as incidents where the same person (or a group of persons) is suspected of committing one or more related homicides. The numbers therefore differ from the total number of recorded homicides presented above (the focus of analysis is on such incidents as it is not possible to statistically model multiple homicides that relate to one case and were recorded on the same day; for that reason the homicides attributed to Dr Harold Shipman and the 7 July London bombings are, for example, each treated in this analysis as one incident). Although each incident is highly related to socio-economic characteristics of the suspect and the victim and independent from other incidents, over a period of time, the probabilities of homicide incidents happening can be closely modelled by a Poisson distribution¹. This can be used to test whether any change in the numbers of incidents per year is statistically significant, or what can be termed within the range of expected “natural variation” of the data.

Expected homicide incidents per day

Between April 2013 and March 2016, the police recorded 1,560 independent homicide incidents in England and Wales. The observed number of homicide incidents on a daily basis closely matches the expected number under the Poisson distribution (Figure 2.9). For example, from knowing there was an average of 1.42 homicide incidents a day, we would predict over the time period of 1,096 days that there would be 267 days on which there would be exactly 2 independent incidents. This is close to the observed number of 261 days, indicating that the occurrence of these apparent “clusters” is not as surprising as one might anticipate. A statistical test (2) shows no significant difference between the expected and observed figures. Thus, the observed figures are Poisson distributed. This allows for calculation of the number of days on which it would be expected that no incidents or one incident occurs and so on.

Figure 2.9: Observed and expected number of homicide incidents recorded on a day, combined data years ending March 2014 to March 2016

Figure 2.9: Observed and expected number of homicide incidents recorded on a day, combined data years ending March 2014 to March 2016



Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Trend analysis

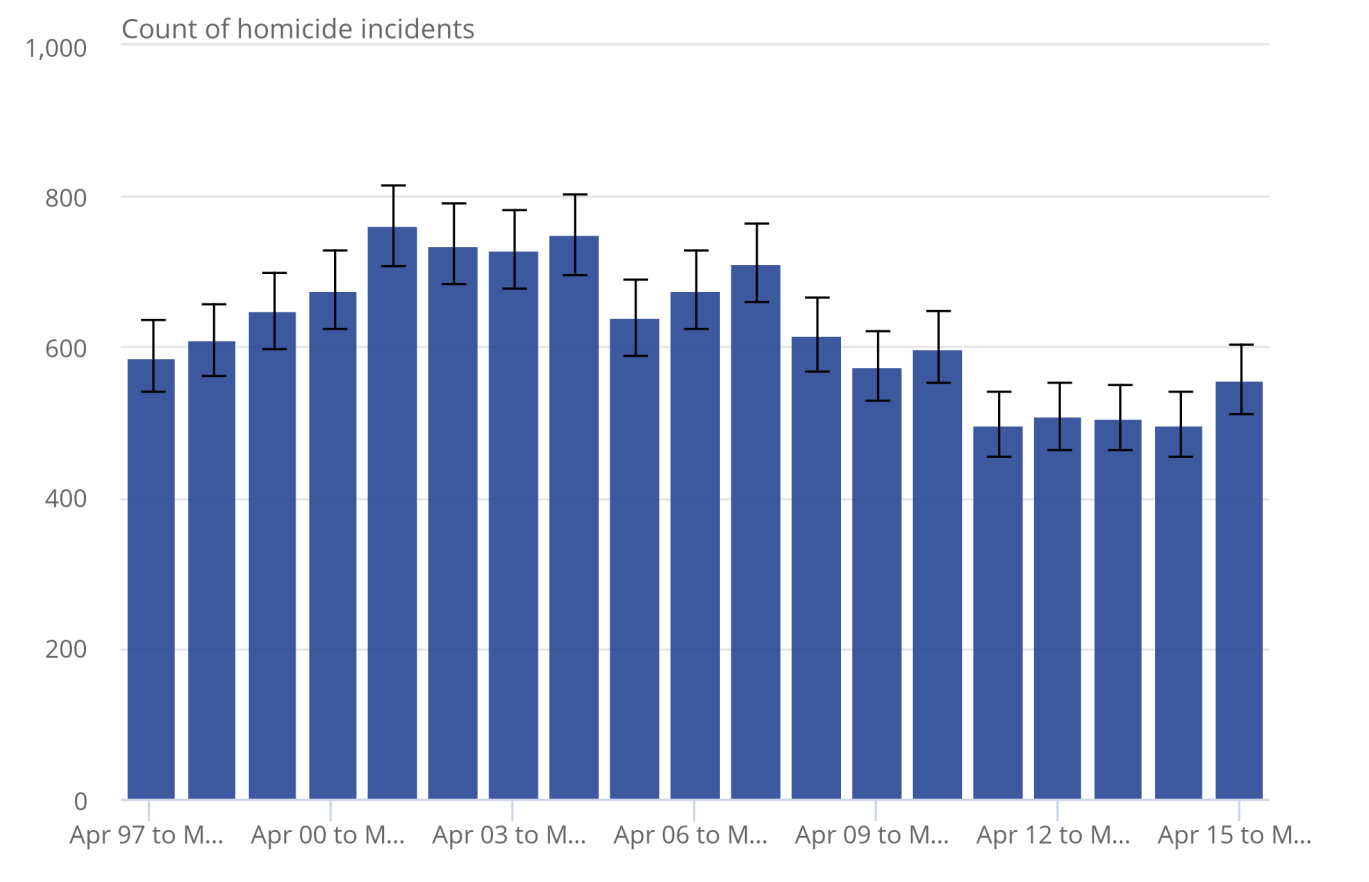
Furthermore, knowing that homicide incidents are statistically distributed allows the application of statistical techniques in order to assess longer-term trends. Figure 2.10 shows the number of homicide incidents since the year ending March 1998. For each year, the observed count is given along with a 95% confidence interval on the Poisson error. The interval represents the range of values one would expect to measure 95% of the time if the underlying risk of homicide remained unchanged. These confidence intervals can be used as a rough approximation to determine whether the number of homicide incidents in any 2 years are statistically different from one another. If the confidence intervals do not overlap, one can infer there has been a significant change in the underlying risk of homicide. However, it is possible for the confidence intervals to overlap and for there still to be a statistically significant change in the number of homicide incidents. In order to measure the significance more accurately, it is appropriate to use a statistical test.

As has been shown previously, the Poisson distribution can be applied to the number of homicide incidents per year and the number of these incidents is large enough to approximate the normal distribution. Therefore a statistical test (in this case a Z-test) can be used to determine if the counts in each year are statistically significantly different from one another at the 95% confidence level (that is, whether there has been a true change in the underlying risk).

Based on this statistical test, one can assess that the number of homicide incidents recorded in the year ending March 2016 was not statistically significantly different at the 95% level than the previous seven years. The number of homicide incidents in the year ending March 2016 is statistically significantly lower than the years between the year ending March 2000 and the year ending March 2008, Figure 2.10). This means the risk of being a victim of homicide was lower for the year ending March 2016 compared with those earlier years.

Figure 2.10: Homicide incident trend analysis, year ending March 1998 to year ending March 2016

Figure 2.10: Homicide incident trend analysis, year ending March 1998 to year ending March 2016



Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Source: Homicide Index, Home Office

Notes:

1. As at 14 November 2016

Many of the short-term fluctuations seen from year to year in the number of homicide incidents are not statistically significant and appear to arise as natural statistical variation in the data. In looking at homicide data the degree of natural variation needs to be considered in interpreting trends and also when looking at year-to-year changes.

Notes for: Statistical interpretation of trends in homicides

1. The Poisson distribution expresses the probability of the number of events occurring in a given period of time if these events occur with a known average rate and independently from each other.

Offences involving the use of weapons

This chapter presents analyses of offences involving weapons recorded by the police in the year ending March 2016, specifically firearms and knives or other sharp instruments. The firearms data collection covers any notifiable offence involving firearms, while coverage of the knives or sharp instruments data is limited to 7 of the most serious violent and sexual offences. Analysis is also carried out on knife carrying by young people, using data from the year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW).

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Release date:
9 February 2017

Next release:
To be announced

Correction

3 March 2017

Small errors have occurred in the Appendix Tables, one Bulletin Table and one figure in section 12 of the commentary due to incorrect links within the files. We have corrected these errors which affected Appendix Tables 3.05, 3.06, 3.14 and 3.17, and Figure 3.10 of the Bulletin Tables.

You can see all previous versions of this data on the previous versions page. We apologise for any inconvenience.

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1 . Main points

There were 8,399 offences in which firearms were involved; a 7% increase compared with the previous year. This is the second annual consecutive increase following a long-term downward trend in offences involving firearms.

Offences involving knives or sharp instruments also rose by 11% over the same period (to 28,859).

There were 26 fatalities resulting from offences involving firearms; 7 more than the previous year. However, the 19 fatalities in the previous year were the lowest since the series began in 1969.

Of the 28,859 offences involving a knife or sharp instrument, 15,137 (52%) were for assault with injury or assault with intent to cause serious harm and 10,516 (36%) were used in a robbery.

Among 10 to 15 year olds, 6.2% said they knew someone who carried a knife for their own protection, as did 4.2% of 16 to 29 year olds.

2 . Things you need to know about this release

Firearms

Information is available from the police on whether a firearm is used during any recorded notifiable offence¹. If a firearm had been used, the Home Office receive additional data about the circumstances of that offence².

“ Offences involving firearms” encompass any notifiable offence recorded by the police where a firearm has been fired, used as a blunt instrument or been used as a threat. Firearm possession offences, where the firearm has not been used in the course of another offence, are not included in this analysis. These offences are published in [Appendix Table A4](#) in the [Crime in England and Wales quarterly release](#).

The different types of firearms included in this section mirror those covered by the [Firearms Act 1968](#) and the associated amendments to the Act. These are:

- firearms that use a controlled explosion to fire a projectile: this category includes handguns, shotguns and rifles; these types of weapon are often used in more serious offences, and tend to account for most of the fatalities and more serious injuries that arise
- imitation firearms: this category includes replica weapons, as well as low-powered weapons which fire small plastic pellets, such as BB guns and soft air weapons; while injuries can occur from offences involving these weapons, they are less common and tend to be less serious
- air weapons: the majority of offences that involve air weapons relate to criminal damage; while air weapons can cause serious injury (and sometimes fatalities), by their nature they are less likely to do so than firearms that use a controlled explosion

Firearms that use a controlled explosion and imitation firearms are combined for the purposes of some analyses in this section, creating 2 broad categories: non-air weapons and air weapons.

Although information is collected on the type of weapon used in an offence, it is not always possible to identify the firearm. For example, some imitation weapons are so realistic that they are indistinguishable from a real firearm. The police will record which type of weapon has been used in an offence given the evidence available. The categorisation of the weapon may also depend on descriptions given by victims or witnesses. If the police do not have sufficient information about the type of firearm used in the offence (for example, if the weapon was not recovered, or if the firearm was concealed during the offence), then the police will record the weapon as an "unidentified firearm".

Knives or other sharp instruments

Information is also available on whether an offence involved a knife or a sharp instrument. Seven of the more serious types of offence in the police recorded crime data (homicide, threats to kill, assault with injury or assault with intent to cause serious harm, robbery, attempted murder, rape and sexual assault) can be broken down by whether or not a knife or sharp instrument was involved. They cover the vast majority of offences involving a knife or sharp instrument, there are very few knives or sharp instruments involved in other offence types. Statistics on offences recorded by the police involving a knife or sharp instrument are also published on a quarterly basis in the [Crime in England and Wales releases](#).

Before the year ending March 2011, there were known inconsistencies in knife or sharp instrument recording practices between police forces. West Midlands and Sussex police forces included unbroken bottle and glass offences in their returns but have excluded these offences in line with other forces since the year ending March 2011. As such, the data since the year ending March 2011 are not comparable with those from earlier years. One force (Surrey) continues to record offences involving unbroken bottles and glass in its knife or sharp instrument returns; however, the estimated number of such offences is small enough that it is not likely to impact on national trends. Thus, the data from the year ending March 2011 onwards are broadly comparable, while in order to extend the time series further back it is necessary to exclude West Midlands and Sussex.

Unlike the data for firearms, the police do not provide detailed information at an offence level in this collection. For this reason it is not possible to analyse victim characteristics or the particular type of sharp instrument used.

In accordance with the [Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007](#), statistics based on police recorded crime data have been assessed against the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#) and found not to meet the required standard for designation as [National Statistics](#). The full assessment report can be found on the [UK Statistics Authority](#) website.

Notes for: Things you need to know about this release

1. Notifiable offences cover those that could possibly be tried by a jury (these include some less serious offences, such as minor theft that would not usually be dealt with in this way) plus a few additional closely related offences, such as assault without injury.
2. The overall firearm offence figures reported here differ from those in the Crime in England and Wales quarterly [releases](#) for 2 reasons: firstly because these data contain air weapon offences, whereas the quarterly releases exclude these offences, and secondly because data in the quarterly releases are provisional and are not reconciled with police forces before publication.
3. A sharp instrument is any object that pierces the skin (or in the case of a threat, is capable of piercing the skin), for example a broken bottle.
4. See Chapter 5 of the [User Guide](#).

3 . Prevalence and trends of offences involving firearms

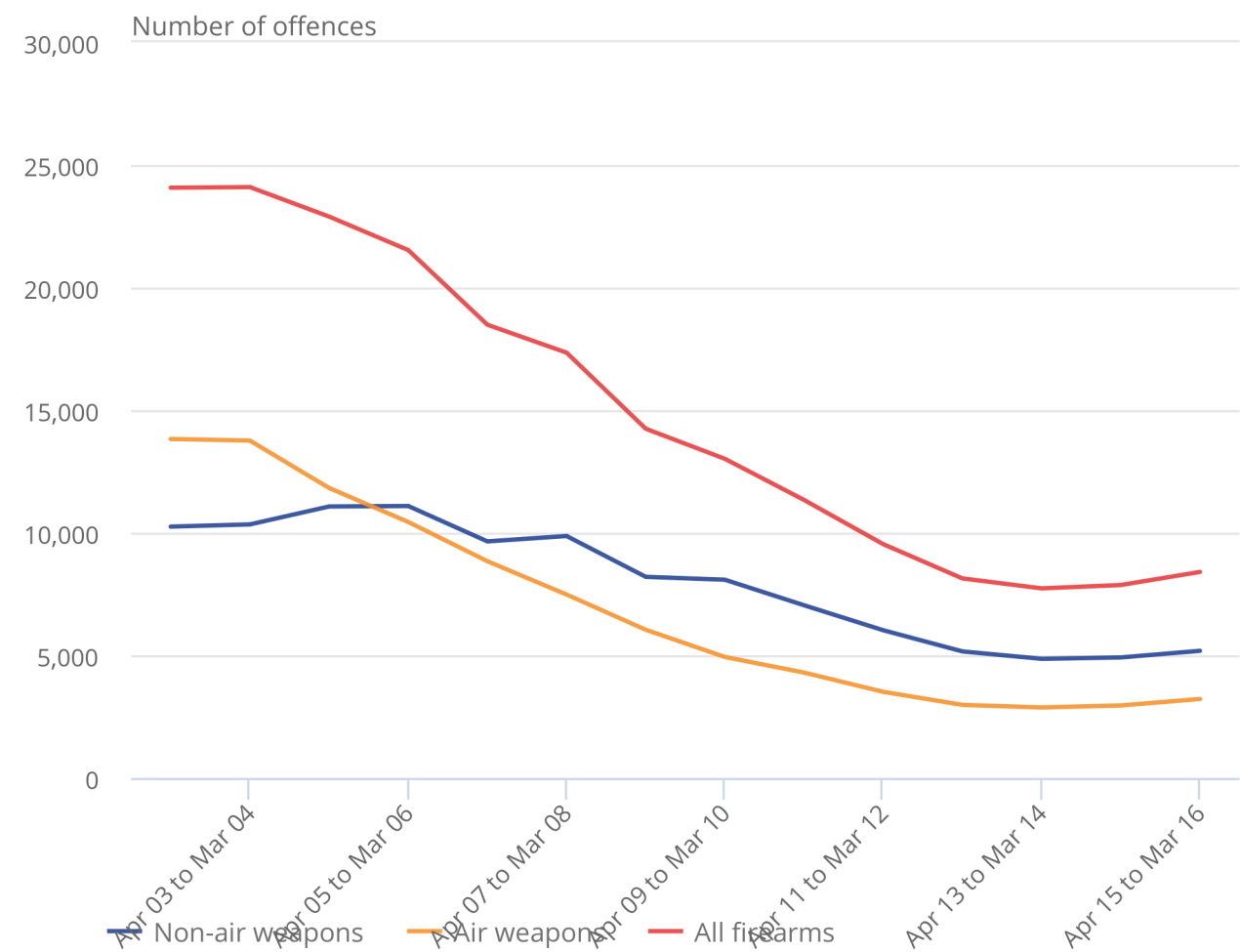
Offences involving firearms make up a small proportion of overall police recorded crime. In the year ending March 2016, they were used in approximately 0.2% of all police recorded offences (excluding fraud), the same proportion seen for the last 4 years ([Appendix Table 3.01](#)). This is a lower proportion than seen 10 years ago when firearms were used in approximately 0.4% of all police recorded offences. More detail on the use of firearms as a proportion of selected offence types is included in the 'Types of offences where firearms are used' section.

The police recorded 8,399 offences involving a firearm in the year ending March 2016, an increase of 7% compared with the previous year (7,865 offences). There were increases in both air weapon (9%) and non-air weapon (6%) offences over the last year (Figure 3.1; [Appendix Table 3.02](#)).

This is the second consecutive annual increase in offences involving firearms but follows the decade between years ending March 2004 and March 2014 in which the number of offences involving firearms fell sharply from 24,094 to 7,729. The 8,399 offences recorded in the year ending March 2016 is around two-thirds lower (65%) than the peak (Figure 3.1; [Appendix Table 3.02](#)).

Figure 3.1: Offences recorded by the police in which firearms were reported to have been used, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2016

Figure 3.1: Offences recorded by the police in which firearms were reported to have been used, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

- 1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
- 2. The Violent Crime Reduction Act introduced in October 2007 made it illegal to import or sell imitation firearms and tightened the rules for the manufacture and sale of certain types of air weapon.

The increase in offences involving firearms over the last 2 years could in part be due to improvements in the police recording of crime. This follows the inspections of forces by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), the [Public Administration Select Committee \(PASC\)](#) inquiry into crime statistics, and the UK Statistics Authority’s decision to remove the National Statistics designation from recorded crime. This renewed focus on the quality of recording has led to improved compliance with the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS).

While there was an overall increase in offences involving firearms in the year ending March 2016, most of the increase was in less serious weapons such as imitation firearms (up 27%; 308 offences) and air weapons (up 9%; 263 offences). It is thought that these increases are due to improvements in police recording of these offences. Furthermore, there has been a decrease in the number of offences involving unidentified firearms, from 833 to 666 (a 20% fall). Information from the police has indicated that the identification of firearms involved in offences has improved in the last year. Therefore, some of the increase in offences involving handguns (up 5%, 96 offences) and imitation weapons may be partly due to this better identification. For more information on improvements in police recording see the 'Things you need to know' section in Chapter 1, the Overview.

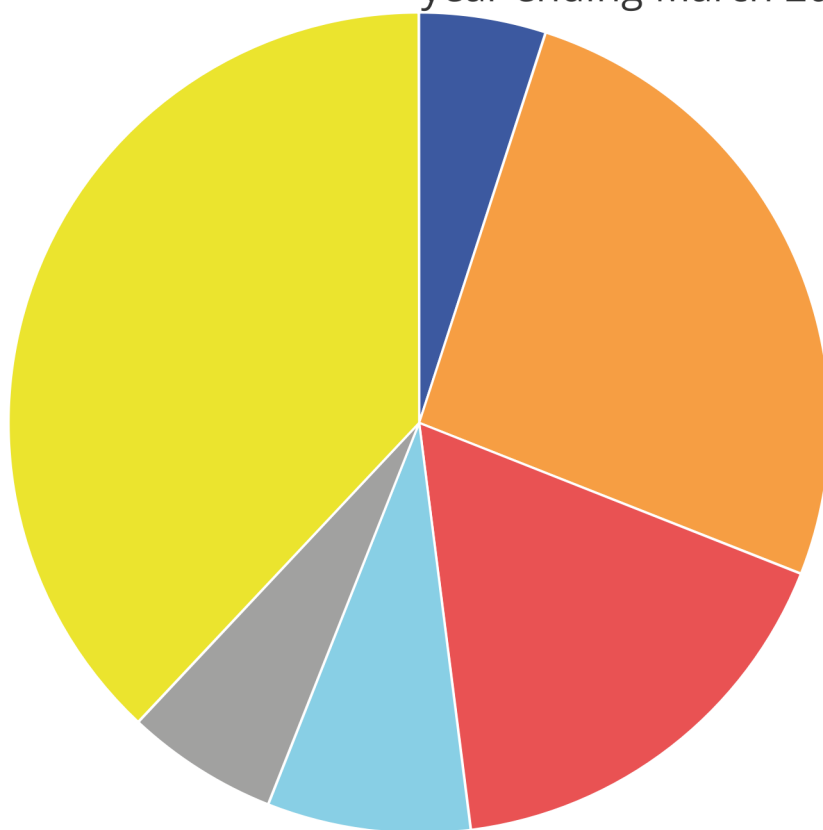
4 . What types of weapons are used in offences involving firearms?

The type of weapon used in offences involving firearms has changed over the last decade. In the year ending March 2006, non-air weapons constituted 52% of offences involving firearms while 48% were air weapons. By the year ending March 2010, the proportion of offences involving non-air weapons had increased to 62%, with a corresponding fall in air weapons to 38%. Since the year ending March 2010, the proportions have remained similar ([Appendix Table 3.03](#)).

Handguns were used in 26% of all offences involving firearms (equivalent to 2,157 offences) in the year ending March 2016, making them the second most commonly used firearm after air weapons (Figure 3.2). Imitation weapons were used in 17% (1,431) of offences involving firearms, while in 8% (666) of offences the type of firearm used was unidentified.

Figure 3.2: Offences recorded by the police in which firearms were reported to have been used, by type of principal weapon, year ending March 2016

Figure 3.2: Offences recorded by the police in which firearms were reported to have been used, by type of principal weapon, year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. A serious injury is one which necessitated a stay in hospital or involves fractures, concussion, severe general shock, penetration by a bullet or multiple shot wounds.

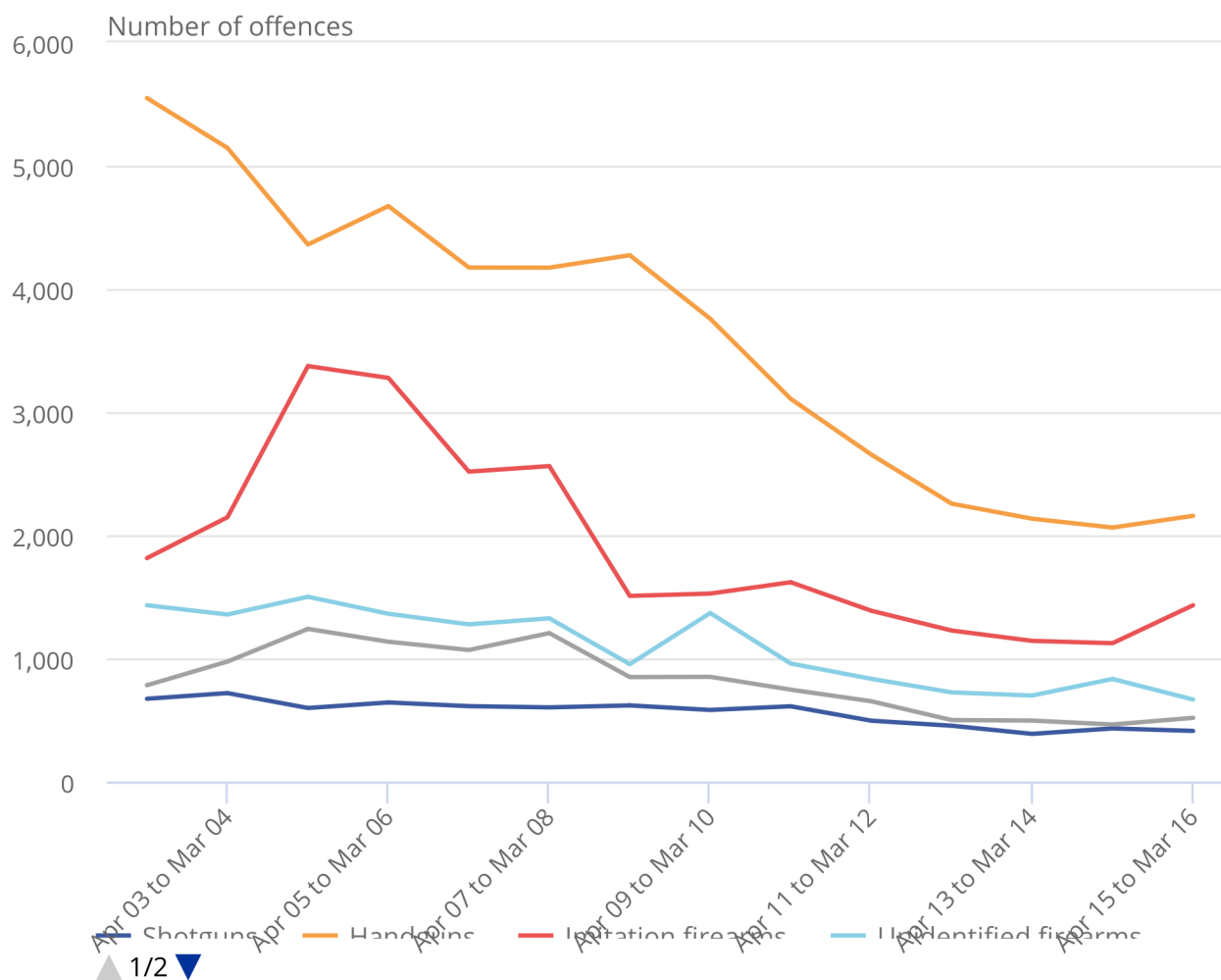
Over the longer-term, there have been steep falls in offences involving all types of firearms (Figure 3.3):

- offences involving handguns have fallen from a peak of 5,549 in the year ending March 2003 to 2,157 in the year ending March 2016, a fall of almost two-thirds (61%)
- the number of imitation weapon offences peaked later, at 3,373 in the year ending March 2005, but was 58% lower in the year ending March 2016 (1,431 offences)
- the number of offences involving unidentified firearms also peaked in the year ending March 2005 (1,500 offences) and has fallen by more than half (56%) since then, to 666 in the year ending March 2016

The trend in shotgun offences differs to that for other non-air weapons, with falls not seen until recent years (Figure 3.3). Shotguns were used in 5% (411) of offences involving firearms recorded by the police in the year ending March 2016. Between the year ending March 2005 and year ending March 2011, there were around 600 shotgun offences per year. In the last 3 years, there have been around 400 offences involving shotguns each year.

Figure 3.3: Offences recorded by the police in which non-air weapons were reported to have been used, by type of principal weapon, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2016

Figure 3.3: Offences recorded by the police in which non-air weapons were reported to have been used, by type of principal weapon, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. More explicit guidelines for the classification of weapons introduced on 1 April 2004 may have affected the recording of firearm offences committed using handguns, imitation weapons, and other weapons.
3. The Violent Crime Reduction Act introduced in October 2007 made it illegal to import or sell imitation firearms and tightened the rules for the manufacture and sale of certain types of air weapon.
4. Imitation firearms include weapons such as BB guns and soft air weapons, which can fire small plastic pellets at low velocity.
5. Rifles and other firearms includes starting guns, prohibited firearms (including CS gas) and other firearms.

5 . How were firearms used?

The data collection on offences involving firearms includes information on how the weapon was used; either being fired, used as a threat or as a blunt instrument. Of the 8,399 offences recorded by the police in the year ending March 2016, the firearm was ([Appendix Tables 3.03 and 3.07](#)):

- fired in 56% of cases (4,727 offences): this proportion has remained fairly stable for the last 8 years but is lower than 10 years ago (67% in the year ending March 2006)
- used as a threat in 42% of cases (3,489 offences): again, this has been fairly stable for the last 8 years but is higher than 10 years ago (29% in year ending March 2006)
- used as a blunt instrument in 2% of cases (183 offences): this is the lowest number of blunt instrument firearm offences since the introduction of the NCRS in April 2002

As in previous years, the likelihood of a weapon being fired varied considerably by weapon type (Figure 3.4; [Appendix Table 3.03](#)):

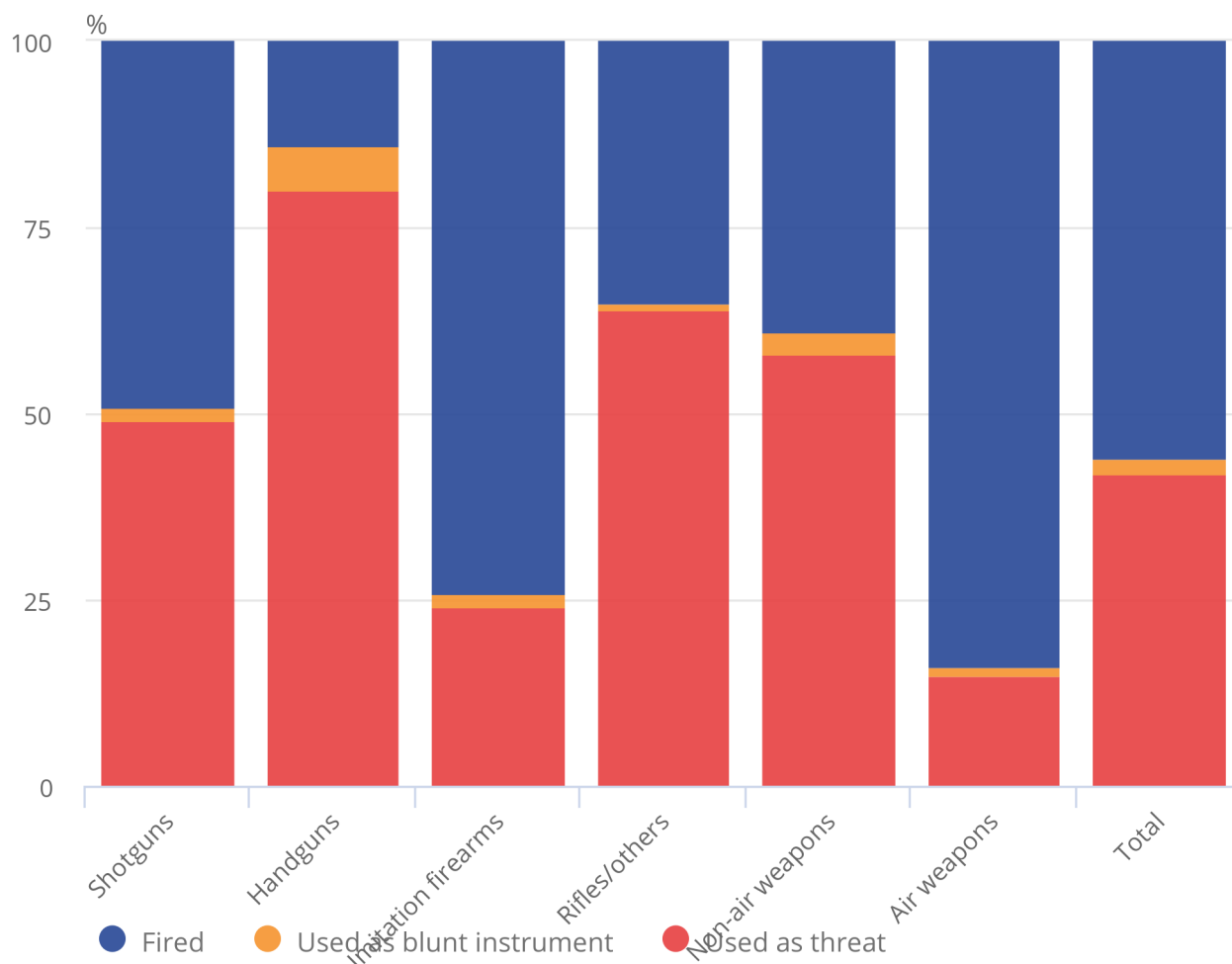
- air weapons were fired in 85% of the 3,217 offences in which they were involved (2,728 offences) and were therefore the most likely weapon to be fired of the main firearm categories; this may reflect that air weapon offences largely do not come to the attention of police unless the weapon is fired and that air weapons are less likely to be used in more serious offences compared with some other weapon types, around two-thirds (67%) of offences involving air weapons were criminal damage offences, compared with just 6% of non-air weapon offences ([Appendix Table 3.08](#))
- in contrast, non-air weapons were fired in 39% of the offences in which they were involved (1,999 offences)

Within non-air weapons:

- handguns were fired in just 14% of the 2,157 offences in which they were used (310 offences); however, this is the highest proportion since the introduction of the NCRS in April 2002, in 80% of offences they were used as a threat and in 6% as a blunt instrument
- shotguns were fired in 49% of the 411 offences in which they were used and in 49% were used to threaten

Figure 3.4: Offences recorded by the police in which firearms were reported to have been used, by type of principal weapon and weapon usage, year ending March 2016

Figure 3.4: Offences recorded by the police in which firearms were reported to have been used, by type of principal weapon and weapon usage, year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Imitation firearms include weapons such as BB guns and soft air weapons, which can fire small plastic pellets at low velocity.
3. Rifles/others includes starting guns, supposed/type unknown, prohibited firearms (including CS gas) and other firearms.

6 . Injuries sustained in offences involving firearms

There were 1,520 injuries as a result of offences involving firearms in the year ending March 2016 ([Appendix Table 3.05](#)). Although this represents a 13% rise on the previous year, the number of injuries in the year ending March 2015 (1,340) was the lowest level seen since 1972, when there were 1,130 injuries¹. The number of injuries in the last year is around two-thirds (70%) lower than 10 years ago (5,004 injuries in the year ending March 2006). The number of injuries tends to rise or fall in line with the overall number of offences. Over the last 10 years, 20% of offences involving firearms have resulted in an injury. In the year ending March 2016, 18% of offences involving firearms resulted in an injury, slightly below this 10 year average.

Severity of injuries sustained

The firearms collection requires police to grade injuries sustained as a result of offences involving firearms as being “slight”, “serious” (that is, requiring a stay in hospital or involving fractures, concussion, severe general shock, penetration by a bullet or multiple shot wounds) or “fatal”. In line with the large falls in the number of offences involving firearms recorded by the police since the year ending March 2003, there have generally been substantial decreases in all types of injury sustained resulting from these offences over this period. In the year ending March 2016, there were increases in all types of injury in line with the increase in the total number of offences:

- there were 26 fatalities resulting from firearms offences, 7 higher than the previous year, the second lowest total since 1980; as in previous years, fatal injuries continue to constitute less than 1% of the total number of firearm offences
- serious injuries increased by 27% during the year ending March 2016, from 183 injuries to 232; however, the number of serious injuries is less than half recorded 10 years ago (595 injuries in the year ending March 2006)
- slight injuries, which consistently account for over 8 in 10 of the injuries caused by firearms, increased from 1,138 to 1,262 in the year ending March 2016, an 11% increase; slight injuries are at less than a third of the level than they were 10 years ago in the year ending March 2006 (4,359 injuries)

Injuries by severity and weapon used

The severity of injuries sustained from offences involving firearms varies according to the type of weapon used. This is to be expected given the range of mechanisms and projectiles associated with individual weapons (for example, air propulsion or controlled explosion; bullet or pellet) and variations in the circumstances and offences in which they are used (Table 3.1, [Appendix Table 3.04](#)).

Table 3.1: Offences recorded by the police in which firearms were reported to have been used, by type of firearm and injury sustained when weapon was fired, year ending March 2016¹

England and Wales

Weapon type	Number of offences	Percentages ²				
		Of those fired:				
		Fired	Fatal injury	Serious injury ³	Slight injury	No injury
Shotguns	411	49	3	32	24	81
Handguns	2,157	14	5	35	49	87
Imitation firearms ⁴	1,431	75	0	1	59	65
Rifles/others ⁵	1,183	35	2	10	50	78
Non-air weapons	5,182	39	1	10	51	38
Air weapons	3,217	85	0	1	9	92
Total	8,399	56	0	3	15	82

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Percentages may not sum due to rounding.
3. A serious injury is one which necessitated a stay in hospital or involves fractures, concussion, severe general shock, penetration by a bullet or multiple shot wounds.
4. Imitation firearms include weapons such as BB guns and soft air weapons, which can fire small plastic pellets at low velocity.
5. Includes starting guns, supposed/type unknown, prohibited firearms (including CS gas) and other firearms.

Injuries to police officers

It is possible to identify how many victims of injuries sustained as a result of firearms offences were on-duty police officers. There were 4 injuries sustained by on-duty police officers in the year ending March 2016, all of which were slight. In general, the number of injuries sustained by police officers as a result of offences involving firearms is lower now than that seen 10 years ago (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Offences recorded by the police in which firearms were reported to have been used, in which a police officer on duty was injured by a firearm (excluding air weapons), by type of injury, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2016

England and Wales

Year	Total	Fatal injury	Serious injury ²	Slight injury
Number of offences				
Apr '02 to Mar '03	12	0	1	11
Apr '03 to Mar '04	14	1	3	10
Apr '04 to Mar '05	23	0	2	21
Apr '05 to Mar '06	23	1	6	16
Apr '06 to Mar '07	21	0	3	18
Apr '07 to Mar '08	24	1	3	20
Apr '08 to Mar '09	9	0	1	8
Apr '09 to Mar '10	17	0	1	16
Apr '10 to Mar '11	9	0	1	8
Apr '11 to Mar '12	8	0	1	7
Apr '12 to Mar '13	4	2	0	2
Apr '13 to Mar '14	5	0	1	4
Apr '14 to Mar '15	5	0	1	4
Apr '15 to Mar '16	4	0	0	4

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. A serious injury is one which necessitated a stay in hospital or involves fractures, concussion, severe general shock, penetration by a bullet or multiple shot wounds.

Notes for: Injuries sustained in offences involving firearms

1. There have been a number of changes to how offences involving firearms have been recorded by the police between 1972 and the present, particularly in 1998 and 2002, so these figures are not directly comparable. However, changes in recording have led to increases in the number of offences recorded – therefore the number of injuries seen in the last few years is relatively low in the series which began in 1969.

7 . Types of offences where firearms are used

The most common offence types in which firearms are used are violence against the person (27%), criminal damage (29%) and robbery (18%). Together these 3 offences accounted for three-quarters (75%) of all firearms offences in the year ending March 2016. While there were sharp falls in all 3 of these offence types up to the year ending March 2012, since then the trends have differed (Figure 3.5, [Appendix Table 3.08](#)).

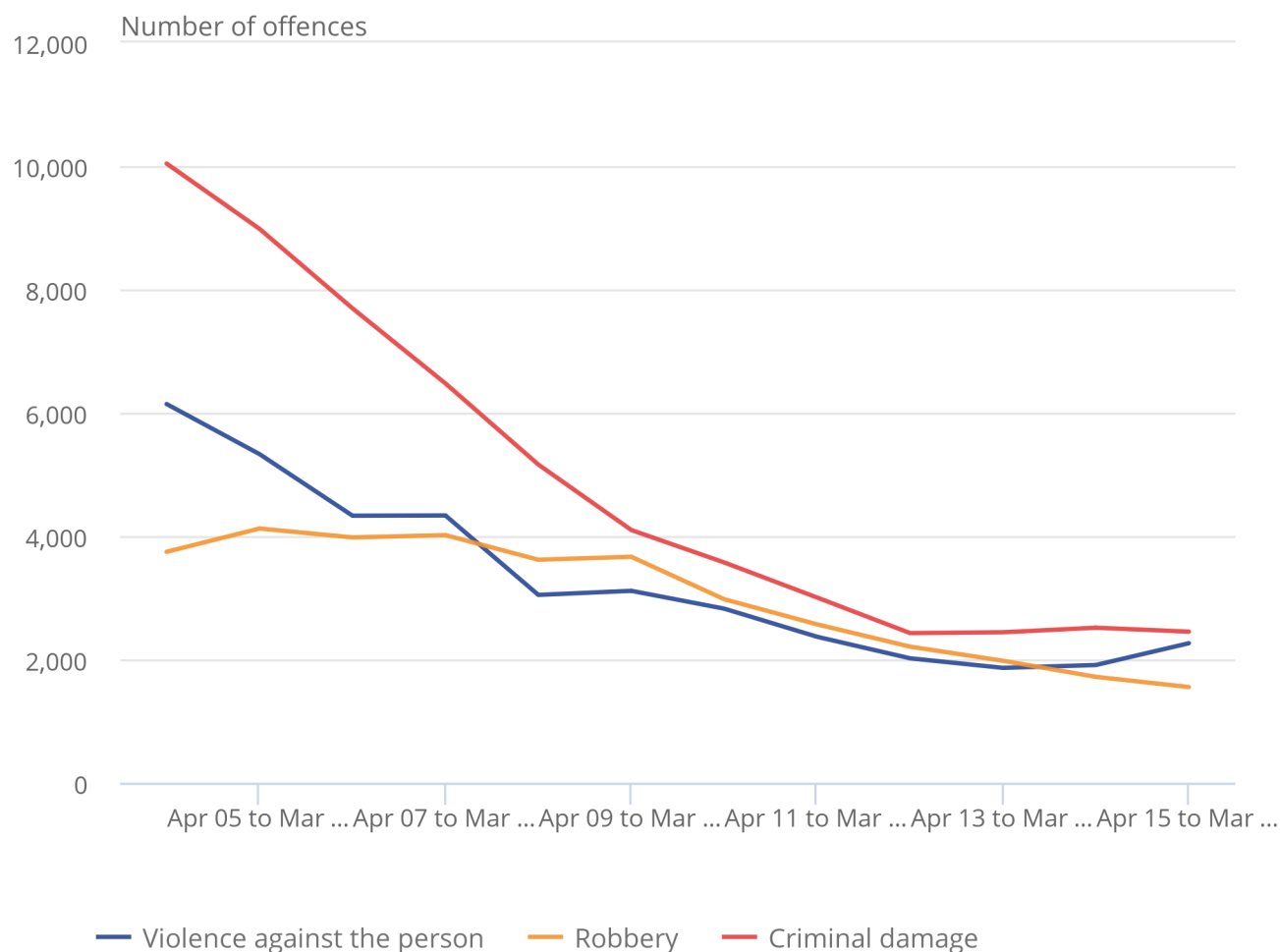
Violence against the person offences involving firearms have increased by 19% during the year ending March 2016, from 1,908 to 2,261. Over the same period, overall police recorded violence against the person also increased, by 28%¹. The increase in violence against the person is thought to be predominantly due to improvements in police recording². The number of these offences involving firearms is 20% lower than 5 years ago (2,822) and 58% lower than 10 years ago (5,327).

Robbery offences involving firearms fell by 10% during the year ending March 2016, from 1,715 to 1,551, continuing the long-term downward trend seen since the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) in April 2002. In contrast, overall robbery offences increased by 2% over the same period. The number of robberies involving firearms has fallen by 62% since the year ending March 2006 (4,121 offences). Overall robbery offences have fallen by 48% over the same period (from 98,168 to 51,127).

Criminal damage offences involving firearms have been relatively flat over the last 4 years, with the 2,449 offences recorded in the year ending March 2016 similar to the 2,426 offences recorded in the year ending March 2013. Prior to this, between the year ending March 2003 and the year ending March 2013, the number of recorded offences fell by over three-quarters (78%).

Figure 3.5: Offences recorded by the police in which firearms were reported to have been used by selected offence type, year ending March 2005 to year ending March 2016

Figure 3.5: Offences recorded by the police in which firearms were reported to have been used by selected offence type, year ending March 2005 to year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

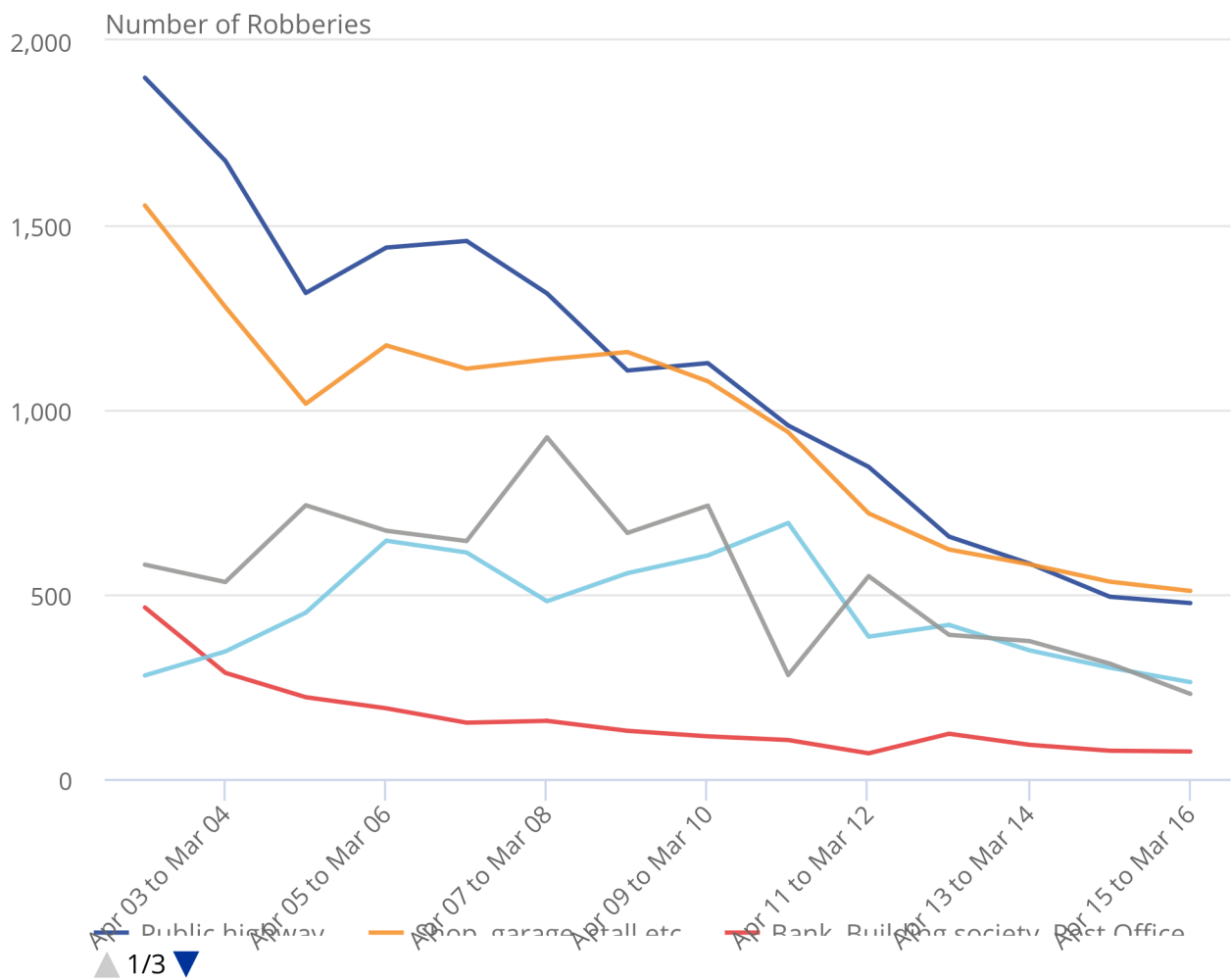
1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Prior to the year ending March 2005 air weapon offences were recorded as homicide, attempted murder, other violence against the person, robbery, burglary, criminal damage or other offences. Unlike non-air weapons, data on the specific offences that constitute these groups is not held therefore the correction relating to 'other violence against the person' offences (described in the Overview chapter) can only be applied to air weapon data from the year ending March 2005 onwards.
3. The Violent Crime Reduction Act introduced in October 2007 made it illegal to import or sell imitation firearms and tightened the rules for the manufacture and sale of certain types of air weapon.

Robberies involving a firearm

According to police recorded crime figures for the year ending March 2016, 89% of all robberies were of personal property and the remaining 11% were of business property ([Appendix Table A4 Crime in England and Wales, Year ending March 2016](#)). Information is available on where the robberies involving firearms took place. Of the 1,551 recorded robbery offences involving a firearm in the year ending March 2016, 33% were committed in shops and garages (509 offences), 31% on public highways (476 offences) and 17% in a residential location (262 offences) (Figure 3.6, [Appendix Table 3.10](#)).

Figure 3.6: Number of robberies in which firearms were reported to have been used, by location of offence, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2016

Figure 3.6: Number of robberies in which firearms were reported to have been used, by location of offence, year ending March 2003 to year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. These crimes are classified as robberies but are mostly break-ins where firearms have been used immediately before or at the time of stealing items from a residential property, and in order to steal these items. If firearms are used instead in the getaway, the crime is classified as a burglary.

In the year ending March 2016, 64% of robberies involving firearms were committed with a handgun ([Appendix Table 3.11](#)).

Notes for: Types of offences where firearms are used

1. These offences are published in [Appendix Table A4](#) in the Crime in England and Wales quarterly release.
2. See the 'Overview' chapter of this publication for more detail on the increase in overall police recorded violence.

8 . Geographical distribution of firearm offences

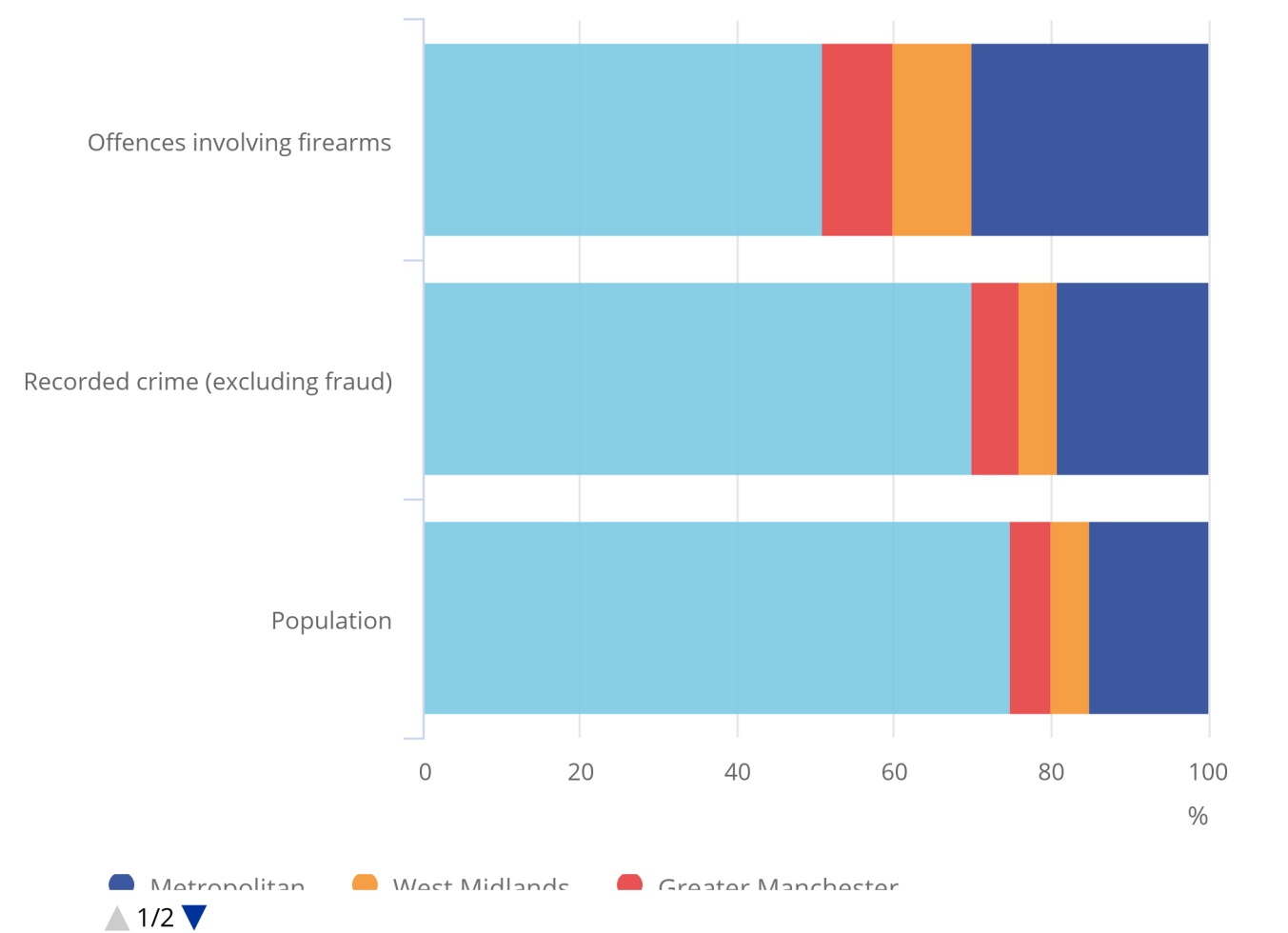
As in previous years, offences involving the use of non-air weapons (which tend to be used in more serious offences) were geographically concentrated in some of the larger metropolitan areas. Around half (49%) of all offences involving a firearm in England and Wales occurred in 3 police force areas: Metropolitan, West Midlands and Greater Manchester. In comparison, a quarter (25%) of the population of England and Wales reside in these areas (Figure 3.7, [Appendix Table 3.12](#)). Figure 3.7 also shows how offences involving firearms are more concentrated than overall police recorded crime.

There were 9 firearm offences per 100,000 people in England and Wales in the year ending March 2016. For the 3 forces mentioned in this section the rates were¹:

- 19 per 100,000 in the West Midlands police force area
- 18 per 100,000 in the Metropolitan police force area
- 16 per 100,000 in the Greater Manchester police force area

Figure 3.7: Proportion of non-air weapon offences, in three police force areas and the rest of England and Wales, compared with population profile of those forces, year ending March 2016

Figure 3.7: Proportion of non-air weapon offences, in three police force areas and the rest of England and Wales, compared with population profile of those forces, year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. The population figures are based on mid-2015 estimates from the Office for National Statistics.

9 . Firearm offences by victim characteristics

As in previous years, in the year ending March 2016 there was variation in the risk of being a victim of an offence involving a non-air weapon by age¹ ([Appendix Table 3.13](#)). Of the non-air weapon offences in which the age of the victim was known (91% of all instances):

- 54% of victims were aged between 15 and 34 even though this age group made up only 26% of the total population of England and Wales
- people aged 60 years and over were less likely to be victims, accounting for 4% of victims of non-air weapon offences but comprising 23% of the population

Further analysis of offences involving firearms by victim characteristics can be found in [Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences: Year ending March 2015](#).

Notes for: Firearm offences by victim characteristics

1. Age breakdowns are not available for all air weapons offences.

10 . Prevalence and trends of offences involving knives or sharp instruments

Knives or other sharp instruments were involved in 28,859 offences recorded by the police in the year ending March 2016, an increase of 11% compared with the previous year (26,040)¹. This is the second consecutive annual increase in the number of recorded offences involving a knife or sharp instrument and follows a previous downward trend since the year ending March 2009 when the series began.

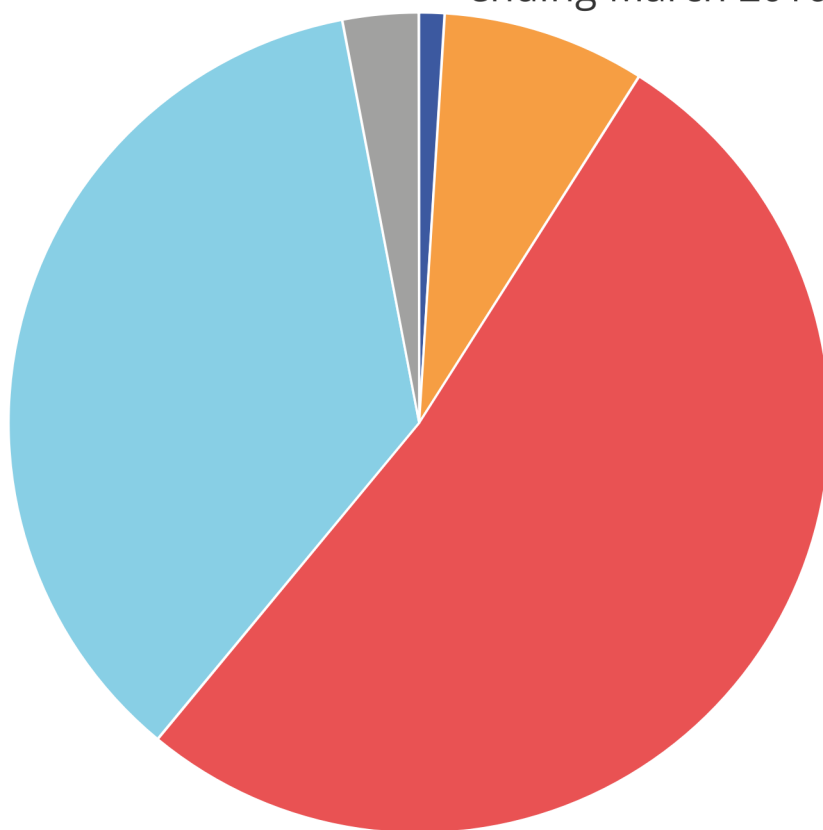
It is generally thought that offences involving knives are less likely to be influenced by changes in recording practice than less serious violent crime, and thus the rise is likely to represent a real change in the downward trend seen in recent years. However, improvements in recording are likely to be a factor in the increase. There was a 15% rise in overall crime recorded by the police in the 7 selected offences covered by the knife crime collection ([Crime in England and Wales, Year ending March 2016](#)). This 15% rise is in part likely to be due to improvements in police recording of crime (see the 'Things you need to know' section in Chapter 1, the Overview for further information).

In some police force areas, it is likely that the rise in offences involving knives is a genuine increase. Hospital admissions for assault by a sharp object have shown a 13% increase in the past year, although this figure is focused on the most serious knife-related crimes. This increase follows a decline in previous years (see the 'Hospital admissions for assault by sharp object' section of this chapter for more information). This may suggest that initial increases in police recorded knife offences were due to improvements in recording rather than a genuine increase. For the year ending March 2016, the picture has been more complex, with potential contributors to the reported rise in knife crime being improvements in recording processes, a genuine rise in knife crime, and a more proactive police response to handling knife crime.

In the year ending March 2016, around half (52%; 15,137 offences) of all knife or sharp instrument offences were for assaults (with injury or with intent to cause serious harm). Just over a third (36%; 10,516 offences) were robberies. Homicides involving a knife or sharp instrument made up less than 1% of the total number of knife or sharp instrument offences (Figure 3.8; [Appendix Table 3.14](#)).

Figure 3.8: Offences recorded by the police in which a knife or sharp instrument was used by selected offence type, year ending March 2016

Figure 3.8: Offences recorded by the police in which a knife or sharp instrument was used by selected offence type, year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

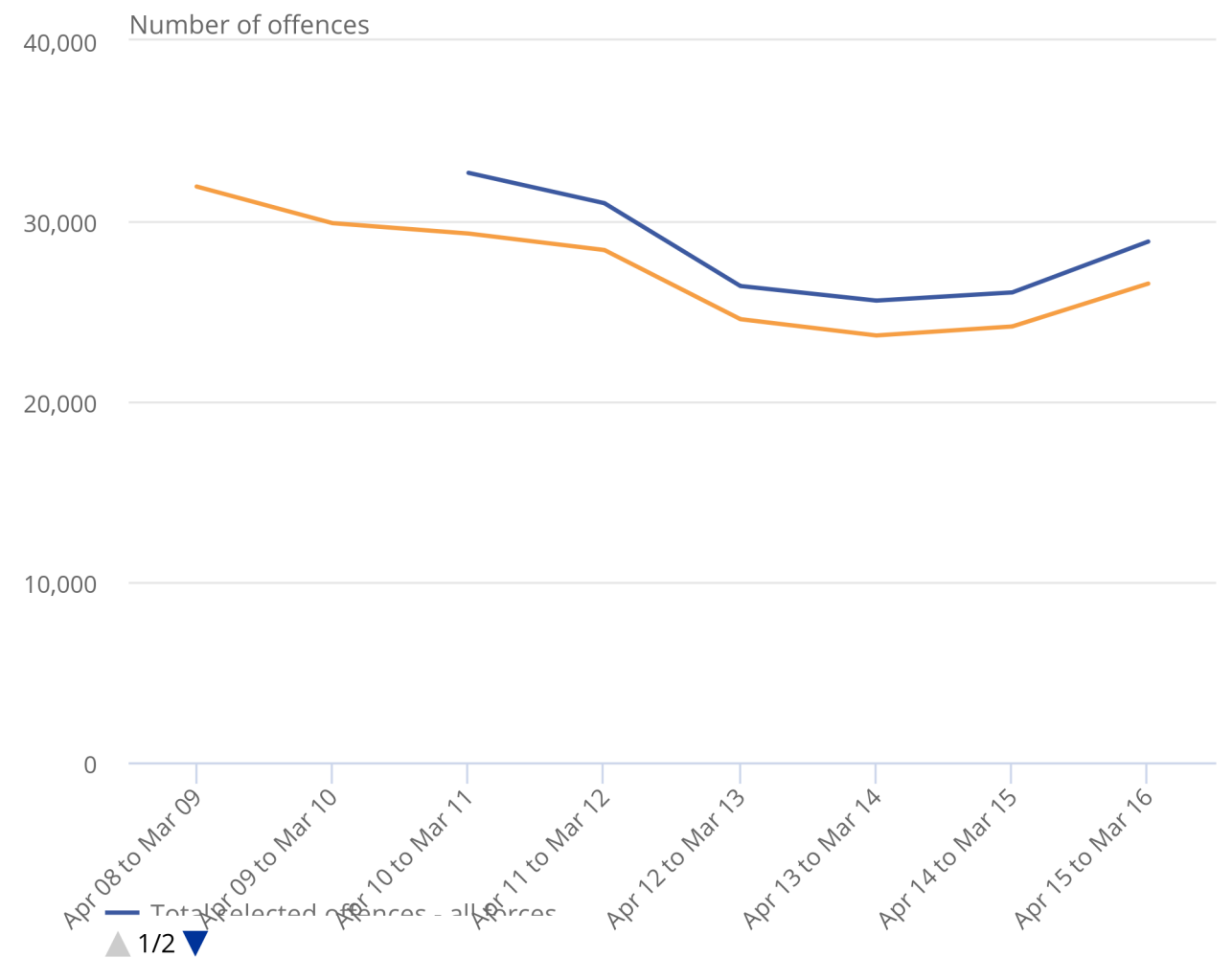
1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. 'Other Offences' includes attempted murder, rape and sexual assault.

The trend in offences involving knives or sharp instruments was downwards between the year ending March 2009 and the year ending March 2014, with the number of offences (excluding the West Midlands and Sussex ²) falling by 26% (Figure 3.9). Since March 2014, there has been a 13% increase in these offences.

Figures for the year ending September 2016 show that the number of offences involving knives or sharp instruments has continued to increase. These increases are analysed in [Crime in England and Wales: year ending September 2016](#).

Figure 3.9: Number of police recorded offences involving a knife or sharp instrument, including and excluding West Midlands and Sussex PFAs, year ending March 2009 to year ending March 2016

Figure 3.9: Number of police recorded offences involving a knife or sharp instrument, including and excluding West Midlands and Sussex PFAs, year ending March 2009 to year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. West Midlands and Sussex changed their recording practices in April 2011, so their data are not comparable over the time period shown.

Notes for: Prevalence and trends of offences involving knives or sharp instruments

1. The offences included are: homicide, threats to kill, assault with injury or assault with intent to cause serious harm, robbery, attempted murder, rape and sexual assault.
2. These forces are excluded as they changed their recording practices in April 2001; see the 'Things you need to know' section of this chapter for more information.

11 . Geographical distribution of offences involving knives or sharp instruments

The Metropolitan Police Service recorded around a third (34%) of all knife or sharp instrument offences (equivalent to 9,738 offences) in England and Wales in the year ending March 2016. This figure is equivalent to 114 offences per 100,000 population, more than twice the rate for England and Wales as a whole (50 offences per 100,000 population). Forces that covered other urban areas also recorded more offences involving knives or sharp instruments and had higher offence rates per 100,000 population than those covering rural areas ([Appendix Table 3.16](#)).¹ A similar trend is observed in offences involving firearms.

Notes for: Geographical distribution of offences involving knives or sharp instruments

1. Population estimates are based on number of people resident in each police force area while number of offences recorded may include those committed against non-residents, for example, people who travel into the city to work. This could partly explain the differences in rates between those areas with large non-resident populations (for example, cities) and those with lower non-resident populations.

12 . Hospital admissions for assault by sharp object

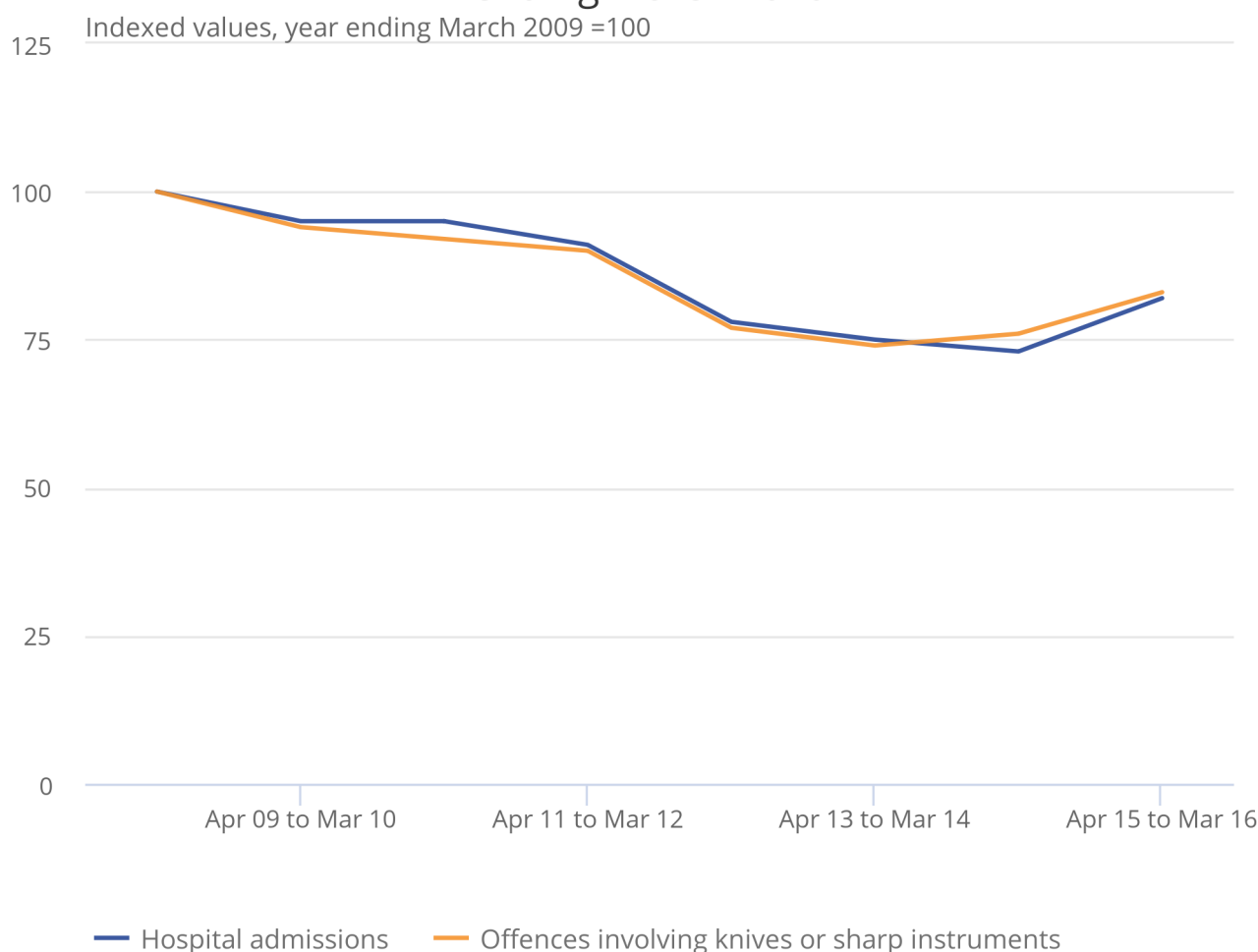
Further information on trends in assault offences by sharp object for England is available from [Hospital Admitted Patient Care Activity, 2015-16](#) published by NHS Digital.

There were 4,054 hospital admissions for assault with sharp instruments in the year ending March 2016, a 13% increase compared with the previous year (3,590 admissions). This follows a period of steady decline between the year ending March 2007 and the year ending March 2015, from 5,720 to 3,590; a fall of 37% over this period ([Appendix Table 3.17](#)).

As expected, the absolute number of recorded knife crime offences is considerably higher than hospital admissions for assault by sharp object. Hospital admissions due to offences involving sharp objects can be expected to be restricted to more serious stabbings and wounding. However, between the year ending March 2009 and the year ending March 2016, trends in hospital admissions for assault with sharp objects and police recorded offences involving knives or sharp instruments have tracked each other very closely – with the exception of the year ending March 2015. In this year, the number of hospital admissions fell slightly, by 2%, while police recorded knife offences increased by 2% (Figure 3.10). This may suggest that initial increases in police recorded knife offences were due to improvements in recording rather than a genuine increase. During the year ending March 2016, the picture has been more complex, as previously mentioned, with potential contributors to the reported rise in knife crime being improvements in recording processes, a genuine rise in knife crime, and a more proactive police response to handling knife crime.

Figure 3.10: Indexed admissions to NHS hospitals with injuries from assault with a sharp object and police recorded offences involving a knife or sharp instrument, England excluding West Midlands and Sussex PFAs, year ending March 2009 to year ending March 2016

Figure 3.10: Indexed admissions to NHS hospitals with injuries from assault with a sharp object and police recorded offences involving a knife or sharp instrument, England excluding West Midlands and Sussex PFAs, year ending March 2009 to year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office, and Hospital Episode Statistics, NHS Digital

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office, and Hospital Episode Statistics, NHS Digital

Notes:

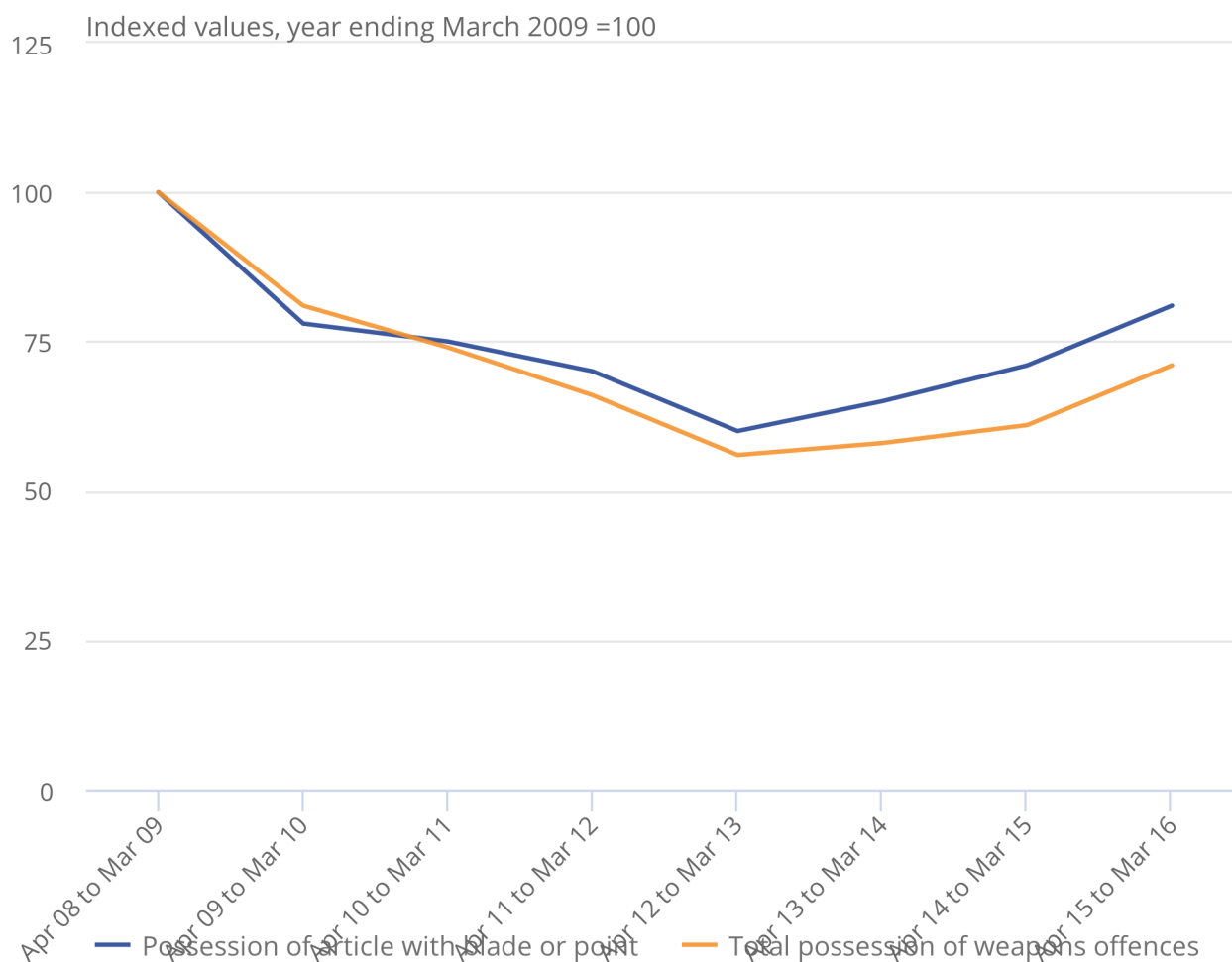
1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. All Welsh PFAs and West Midlands and Sussex PFA are excluded. West Midlands and Sussex changed their recording practices in April 2011, so their data are not comparable over the time period shown.
3. Data for 2015 is year ending April.

13 . Possession of knives or sharp instruments

The number of offences of possession of an article with a blade or sharp point recorded by the police increased by 14% between the year ending March 2015 and the year ending March 2016 (9,873 to 11,498) ([Appendix Table A4](#); Crime in England and Wales, Year ending March 2016). This is the third consecutive annual rise; prior to this, there was a downward trend since the year ending March 2009, when the offence classification to specifically record possessions of article with blade or point was introduced. This figure can often be influenced by increases in targeted police action in relation to knife crime. The latest figure of 11,498 remains 18% below the recorded number of possessions of article with blade or point in the year ending March 2009 (13,985) (Figure 3.11).

Figure 3.11: Indexed trends of possession of article with blade or point offences and total possession of weapons offences, England and Wales, year ending March 2009 to year ending March 2016

Figure 3.11: Indexed trends of possession of article with blade or point offences and total possession of weapons offences, England and Wales, year ending March 2009 to year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.

14 . What does the CSEW tell us about knife carrying?

This section presents findings from questions on knife-carrying from the self-completion¹ module of the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) for the year ending March 2016. These questions were asked of 10 to 15 year olds and 16 to 29 year olds. The questions were first asked in the year ending March 2012 survey for 10 to 15 year olds but were not asked of 16 to 29 year olds until the year ending March 2014.

Firstly, respondents were asked whether they knew anyone who carried a knife for their own protection, for example, in case they got into a fight. The year ending March 2016 survey estimated that 6.2% of 10 to 15 year olds knew someone who carried a knife for their own protection, a percentage that has not changed significantly over time² (Table 3.3). A similar percentage (4.2%) of 16 to 29 year olds knew someone who carried a knife.

Secondly, respondents were asked whether they had personally carried a knife for their own protection in the last 12 months. A very small proportion (0.3% of 10 to 15 year olds, and 0.7% of 16 to 29 year olds) personally carried a knife. Again, the changes in this series over time are not statistically significant.

Table 3.3 Prevalence of knife carrying, 10 to 15 year olds and 16 to 29 year olds, year ending March 2012 to year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales^{1,2}

England and Wales

	Apr '11 to Mar '12	Apr '12 to Mar '13	Apr '13 to Mar '14	Apr '14 to Mar '15	Apr '15 to Mar '16
Percentages					
10 to 15 year olds					
Know someone who carries a knife	5.2	5.1	4.3	5.8	6.2
Has personally carried a knife in the last 12 months	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.3
Unweighted base - number of children aged 10 to 15 ²	3,915	2,866	2,917	2,358	2,771
16 to 29 year olds					
Know someone who carries a knife	:	:	4.5	4.6	4.2
Has personally carried a knife in the last 12 months	:	:	0.6	0.6	0.7
Unweighted base - number of adults aged 16 to 29 ²			2,567	2,315	2,391

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. These questions were first asked in the survey for 10 to 15 year olds in the year ending March 2012 and for 16 to 29 year olds in the year ending March 2014
2. Includes don't know/don't want to answer.
3. : indicates that the CSEW question was not asked in that particular year.

Notes for: What does the CSEW tell us about knife carrying?

1. "Self-completion" means that the respondent reads the questions themselves and records their answers directly onto a laptop.
2. The estimate for the year ending March 2014 shown in Table 3.3, although significantly different to the preceding and subsequent year, looks out of line with the series.

Domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking

This chapter presents findings from the year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) self-completion module on intimate violence which is asked of adults aged 16 to 59. The module covers experience of emotional, financial and physical abuse by partners or family members, as well as sexual assaults and stalking by any person. This chapter also presents information on domestic abuse recorded by the police.



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Release date:
9 February 2017

Next release:
To be announced

Correction

25 May 2017

A correction has been made to Figure 4.7. This was due to a small error when the figure showing intimate violence experienced by women was also used for men. This has now been corrected to show the correct figure for intimate violence experienced by men and is consistent with existing commentary for Figure 4.7.

We apologise for any inconvenience.

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6. [Characteristics associated with being a victim of intimate violence](#)
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1 . Main points

The CSEW estimates that 7.7% of women and 4.4% of men experienced any type of domestic abuse in the last year. This is equivalent to an estimated 1.3 million female victims and 716,000 male victims.

Overall, 26% of women and 14% of men had experienced domestic abuse since the age of 16, equivalent to an estimated 4.3 million female victims and 2.2 million male victims.

The decline in domestic abuse for all victims between the year ending March 2005 and the year ending March 2009 CSEW surveys was statistically significant. This has been followed by a period of small, non-statistically significant, changes from year to year, but the cumulative effect of these changes in recent years has resulted in a significantly lower prevalence for the year ending March 2016 (6.1%) compared with the year ending March 2012 (7.0%), indicating a longer-term underlying downward trend.

Women were more likely to have experienced all types of intimate violence than men in the last 12 months except family abuse (non-sexual), where the difference was non-significant.

The biggest difference between women and men was for sexual assault, with women nearly 5 times as likely to have experienced this form of abuse as men (3.2% compared with 0.7%). Women also experienced significantly more intimate violence since the age of 16 than men, for all main types and sub-categories of intimate violence including family abuse (non-sexual).

There were a total of 1,031,120 domestic abuse-related incidents and crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales in the year ending March 2016. Of these, 421,185 (41%) were recorded as crimes while the remaining 609,935 (59%) were incidents not subsequently recorded as a crime and remained as incidents.

2 . Things you need to know

This chapter includes findings from the year ending March 2016 self-completion module of the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) on the extent of, and trends in, intimate violence among men and women aged 16 to 59 resident in households in England and Wales. Intimate violence is a collective term used here to refer to a number of different forms of physical and non-physical abuse consisting of partner abuse, family abuse, sexual assault and stalking. The term reflects the intimate nature either of the victim-perpetrator relationship or of the abuse itself.

While this chapter is focused on findings from the CSEW, it also includes some information from the police on domestic abuse. The Home Office is responsible for the collation of recorded crime data supplied by the 43 territorial police forces of England and Wales, plus the British Transport Police¹. The police supply data to the Home Office on the number of domestic abuse incidents and crimes they have dealt with in their force area². These data have been collected based upon the governmental definition of domestic abuse³.

Headline CSEW figures for intimate violence included within this chapter have previously been published in July 2016 alongside the [Crime in England and Wales: year ending March 2016](#) bulletin. Some information on the prevalence of domestic abuse and domestic abuse recorded by the police included within this chapter was first published in December 2016 within the [Domestic abuse in England and Wales: year ending March 2016](#) report. This report covers how domestic abuse is dealt with across the criminal justice system and in local areas, incorporating a wider range of domestic abuse data than within this publication. This publication also covers other intimate violence, namely sexual assault and stalking occurring outside of a domestic setting.

Crime Survey for England and Wales

One of the strengths of the CSEW is that it covers many crimes that are not reported to the police. The under-reporting of crime to the police is known to be particularly acute for intimate violence offences, with many more offences committed than are reported to and recorded by the police. Estimates based on those interviewed in the Crime Survey for England and Wales during the [year ending March 2015](#) showed that around 4 in 5 victims (79%) of partner abuse⁴ did not report the abuse to the police. The data held by the police can, therefore, only provide a partial picture of the level of intimate violence experienced in England and Wales. The CSEW provides reliable estimates of the prevalence of intimate violence using a consistent methodology that is not affected by changes in recording practices and police activity; however the CSEW cannot be used to make any inferences about demands on the police or the criminal justice system in relation to intimate violence.

Estimates of the prevalence of domestic violence (a narrower definition than domestic abuse, which excludes non-physical abuse and threats) based on face-to-face⁵ CSEW interviews are regularly published⁶. However, domestic violence measured this way is prone to significant under-reporting.

This type of violence is liable to under-reporting in face-to-face interviews due to the unwillingness of some victims to disclose such sensitive incidents to an interviewer. Figures from the face-to-face CSEW interviews therefore cannot provide information on the overall level of domestic violence experienced by adults in England and Wales.

A self-completion module⁷ on intimate violence was first included in the CSEW in 2001 and then on a continuous basis since April 2004⁸. The use of self-completion on tablet computers (and previously laptops) allows respondents to feel more at ease when answering questions on sensitive issues due to increased confidence in the privacy and confidentiality of the survey. The prevalence of domestic abuse reported in the self-completion module is significantly higher than the prevalence of domestic violence reported in the face-to-face interview. This is likely to be due to:

- the increased reporting of sensitive issues on account of the greater confidentiality provided by self-completion methods
- the broader definition of domestic abuse used in the self-completion module⁹

Unlike estimates from face-to-face interviews, the self-completion module is not affected by the current method of handling high-frequency repeat victimisation (see the Overview chapter of this publication for more information).

Comparing those who reported physical domestic abuse in the self-completion module with those who reported the similar category of domestic violence in the face-to-face interview provides evidence that respondents are much more likely to report sensitive issues in the self-completion module. Of those aged 16 to 59 who reported being victims of physical domestic abuse¹⁰ in the self-completion module, only 16%¹¹ reported being a victim of domestic violence in the last 12 months in face-to-face interviews (19% for women and 11% for men). The self-completion module provides a more complete measure of intimate violence victimisation and, as there are several differences between the coverage of the self-completion and face-to-face estimates, care should be taken when making comparisons between the two.

Under-reporting of intimate violence in face-to-face interviews is also evident in the small number of sexual offences identified via this method. The figures are too unreliable to report and these data are excluded from the headline CSEW estimates. Therefore the self-completion module is the only source for estimates of these crimes.

The self-completion module is currently restricted to respondents aged 16 to 59, although the upper age limit is being reviewed. Between October 2016 and December 2016, the age limit was removed for a quarter of the sample to include all ages, with the aim to extend to the whole sample from April 2017 if this testing proved successful. It is envisaged that a decision on this will be made in March 2017.

Domestic abuse recorded by the police

Domestic abuse-related offences are those where the police have identified that the crime is domestic abuse-related. As domestic abuse is not a specific criminal offence, offences that are domestic abuse-related will have been recorded under the respective offence that has been committed, for example, assault with injury. As the police recorded domestic abuse-related collection began in April 2015, it is not possible to determine how many crimes were domestic abuse-related prior to this date.

The Home Office are continuing to implement an improved data collection system called the Data Hub which streamlines the process by which forces submit data. The Home Office Data Hub replaces the old system of aggregate returns with automated capturing of record level crime data via direct extracts from forces' own crime recording systems. This allows the police to provide more detailed information to the Home Office enabling a greater range of analyses to be carried out. The migration to the Data Hub is ongoing and for forces providing data via the Data Hub, it is possible to exploit this richer data and conduct a more in-depth analysis of police recorded offences that were flagged as domestic abuse-related.

Definitions

Intimate violence is a collective term used to refer to a number of different forms of physical and non-physical abuse consisting of partner abuse, family abuse, sexual assault and stalking. The term reflects the intimate nature either of the victim-perpetrator relationship or of the abuse itself.

The overall category of domestic abuse combines the following different types of abuse:

- non-sexual abuse by a partner: physical force, emotional or financial abuse, or threats to hurt the respondent or someone close to them, carried out by a current or former partner
- non-sexual abuse by a family member: physical force, emotional or financial abuse, or threats to hurt the respondent or someone close to them, carried out by a family member other than a partner (father or mother, step-father or mother or other relative)
- sexual assault carried out by a partner or other family member: rape or assault by penetration (including attempts), or indecent exposure or unwanted touching carried out by a current or former partner or other family member
- stalking¹² carried out by a partner or other family member: 2 or more incidents (causing distress, fear or alarm) of receiving obscene or threatening unwanted letters, e-mails, text messages or phone calls, having had obscene or threatening information about them placed on the internet, waiting or loitering around home or workplace, or following or watching by a current or former partner or family member¹³

Intimate violence is not limited to domestic abuse. Sexual assault and stalking can also occur outside of domestic abuse if carried out by somebody who is not a current or former partner or other family member of the victim.

The CSEW definition of domestic abuse broadly matches the [cross-government definition](#), but does not completely capture the new offence of “[coercive and controlling behaviour](#)¹⁴”, which was introduced on 29 December 2015. The new law captures coercive control through psychological and emotional abuse that can stop short of physical violence. The CSEW has measured some elements of such non-physical abuse since April 2004, but is unlikely to completely match the same coverage of the new offence. New survey questions to better estimate experiences of this type of abuse are currently being developed, and will be implemented into the survey from April 2017 if testing proves successful. Figures from the current questions are presented under the category of “non-physical abuse (emotional, financial)” in the appendix tables as part of both non-sexual abuse by a partner and non-sexual abuse by a family member.

There are 2 headline measures of intimate violence in the CSEW: one relates to experiences since the age of 16 and the other is limited to those experiences in the 12 months prior to interview. As well as a self-completion module asking questions on the types of intimate violence experienced, the CSEW also includes a self-completion module which asks victims for further details about the nature of the incidents they experienced. These questions usually focus on partner abuse or sexual assault in alternate survey years. However, in the year ending March 2016 these questions were replaced with a new set of questions asking about childhood experience of abuse ([Abuse during childhood: Findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales, year ending March 2016](#)). This chapter therefore only provides statistics relating to the prevalence of intimate violence, with no additional detail on the nature of the incidents experienced.

Notes for: Things you need to know

1. For more information on how police forces submit their data to the Home Office, please refer to Section 3.1 of the [User Guide to Crime Statistics](#).
2. These figures are not National Statistics.
3. See [guidance on domestic violence and abuse](#) for the definition.
4. Partner abuse is defined as any non-physical abuse, threats, force, sexual assault or stalking where the perpetrator is a partner or ex-partner. Questions on the nature of partner abuse are only asked in alternate survey years and were not asked in the year ending March 2016; therefore it is not possible to provide this data for the year ending March 2016.
5. In a “face-to-face” interview, an interviewer reads the questions out to the respondent and records the answers given
6. See Appendix Table A3 of [quarterly crime statistics publications](#).
7. Self-completion’ means that the respondent reads the questions themselves and records their answers directly onto a laptop
8. The 2001 module differed from the one used since the year ending March 2005 and therefore the year ending March 2005 is used as a baseline for trends.
9. Mainly that the self-completion definition of domestic abuse includes emotional or financial abuse or threats to hurt the respondent or someone close to them.
10. Victims of force by a partner or family member in the last year
11. In previous years, this analysis has included victims of any sexual assault by a partner or family member but these victims have now been excluded to be more comparable with the definition of domestic violence used in the face-to-face CSEW interview
12. The CSEW definition of stalking is not consistent with the legal definition due to the introduction of the offence of “coercive and controlling behaviour”, which includes stalking by a current partner.
13. From the year ending March 2013 survey onwards the definition of stalking was changed to be in line with the legal definition of two or more incidents that was introduced in April 2013. See the What is happening to trends in intimate violence? section of this chapter for more information.
14. This offence is now included in the [Home Office Counting Rules](#), under the category of “Assault without injury”. This is the only specific offence for domestic abuse. Other types of domestic abuse are recorded under more generic offences such as assault.

3 . What is the extent of intimate violence?

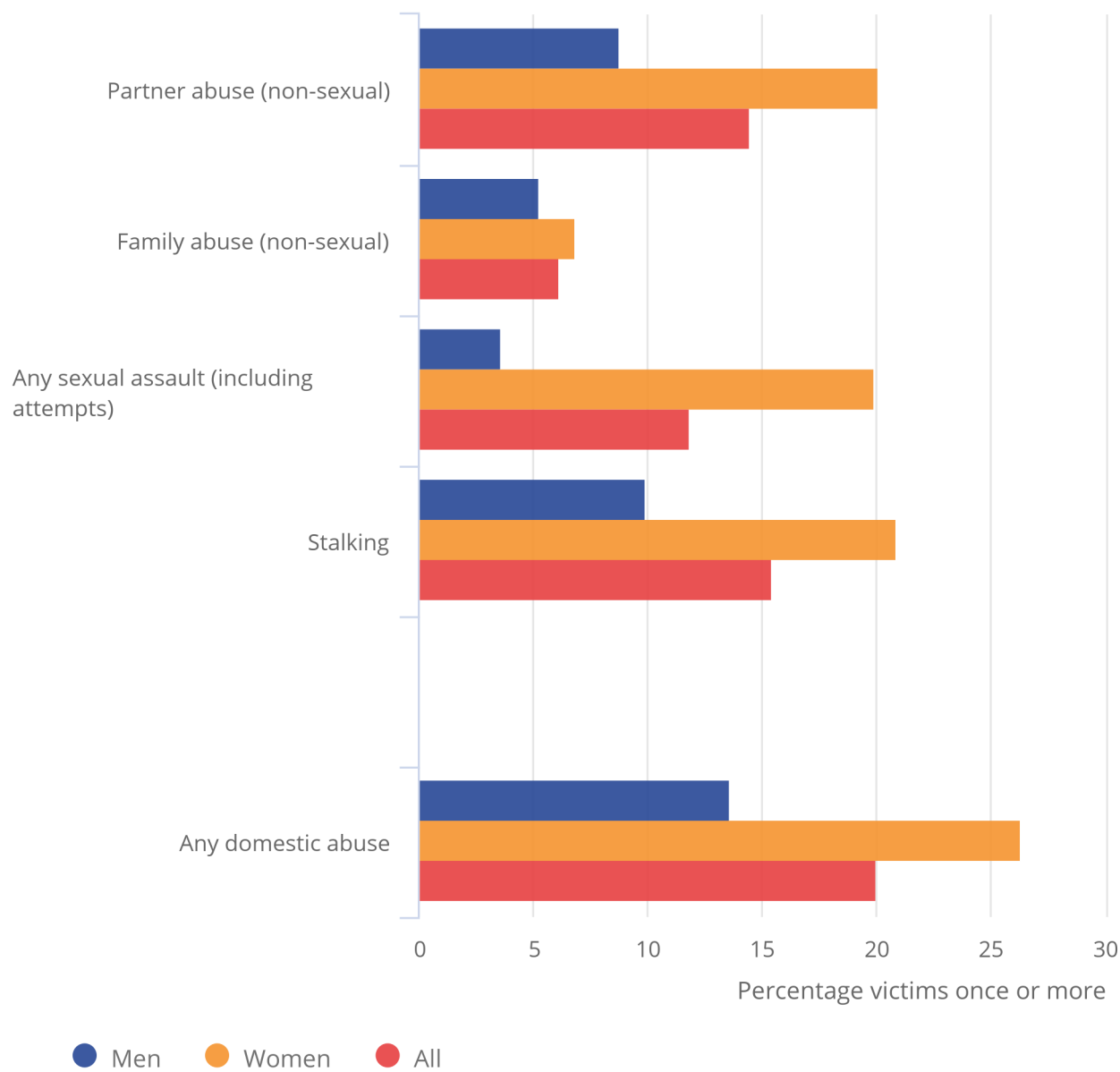
Intimate violence experienced since the age of 16

Looking across all the sub-categories of intimate violence, estimates for women were statistically significantly higher than estimates for men. This pattern is broadly similar to patterns seen in previous years. The year ending March 2016 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) showed that:

- women were around twice as likely to have experienced domestic abuse since the age of 16 (26.3%) than men (13.6%) ([Appendix Table 4.01](#) and Figure 4.1)
- an estimated 4.3 million females and 2.2 million males aged 16 to 59 have been a victim of domestic abuse since the age of 16 ([Appendix Table 4.02](#))
- similar proportions of women experienced stalking (20.9%), non-sexual partner abuse (20.1%) and sexual assault (19.9%) since the age of 16
- sexual assault (including attempts) is where the largest difference between men and women is observed, with women being over 5 times as likely as men to have experienced this type of abuse since the age of 16 (19.9% of women compared to 3.6% of men, Figure 4.1); the majority of these were incidents of indecent exposure or unwanted sexual touching, which were experienced by around 5 times as many women as men (18.6% compared with 3.3%), women also experienced more incidents of rape or assault by penetration (including attempts) than men since the age of 16 (6.0% compared with 0.5%).
- for men, the most commonly experienced types of intimate violence were stalking (9.9%) and non-sexual partner abuse (8.8%), the least commonly experienced type of abuse for men was sexual assault (including attempts) (3.6%); non-sexual family abuse was the least commonly experienced type of abuse for women, but women still experienced significantly more non-sexual family abuse than men (6.8% and 5.3% respectively)

Figure 4.1: Percentage of adults aged 16 to 59 who experienced intimate violence since the age of 16, by sex and type of intimate violence, year ending March 2016, Crime Survey for England and Wales

Figure 4.1: Percentage of adults aged 16 to 59 who experienced intimate violence since the age of 16, by sex and type of intimate violence, year ending March 2016, Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

- 1. "Any domestic abuse" is not the sum of the other categories. Some victims of sexual assault and stalking will not be included in 'any domestic abuse' if the incidents experienced were not perpetrated by a partner /ex-partner or family member. Also, some victims may be included in multiple categories as they can experience more than one type of abuse.

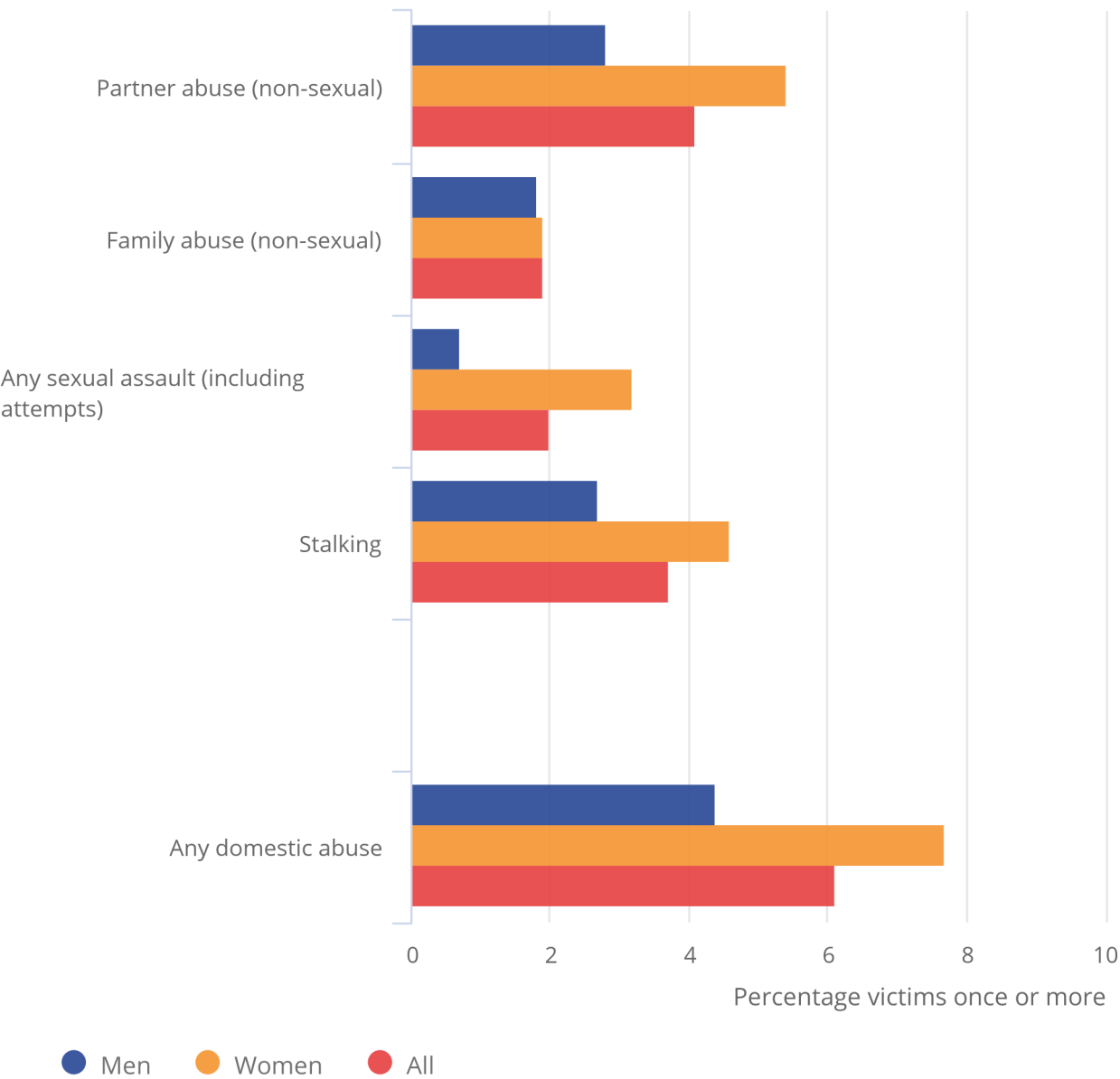
Intimate violence experienced in the last year

Respondents who had reported at least 1 incident of being a victim of intimate violence since they were 16 were asked whether they had been a victim in the last year. With the exception of family abuse, the prevalence of all other types of intimate violence experienced in the last year was statistically significantly higher for women compared with men. This pattern is broadly similar to patterns seen in previous years. The year ending March 2016 CSEW showed that ([Appendix Tables 4.01 and 4.03](#); Figure 4.2):

- 7.7% of women and 4.4% of men reported having experienced domestic abuse in the last year, which is consistent with the difference in adult lifetime prevalence¹ (26.3% compared with 13.6%); this is equivalent to an estimated 1,272,000 female victims and 716,000 male victims aged between 16 and 59
- non-sexual partner abuse was the most common type of intimate violence experienced in the last year (5.4% of women compared with 2.8% of men)
- 3.2% of women and 0.7% of men had experienced some form of sexual assault (including attempts) in the last year; the majority of these were incidents of indecent exposure and unwanted sexual touching, which were experienced by around four times as many women as men (2.8% compared with 0.6%)
- fewer than 0.1% of men had experienced sexual assault by rape or penetration (including attempts) compared with 0.7% of women

Figure 4.2: Percentage of adults aged 16 to 59 who experienced intimate violence in the last year, by sex and type of intimate violence, year ending March 2016, Crime Survey for England and Wales

Figure 4.2: Percentage of adults aged 16 to 59 who experienced intimate violence in the last year, by sex and type of intimate violence, year ending March 2016, Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

- 1. "Any domestic abuse" is not the sum of the other categories. Some victims of sexual assault and stalking will not be included in 'any domestic abuse' if the incidents experienced were not perpetrated by a partner /ex-partner or family member. Also, some victims may be included in multiple categories as they can experience more than one type of abuse.

Notes for: What is the extent of intimate violence?

1. Adult lifetime prevalence refers to intimate violence reported since the age of 16

4 . Domestic abuse recorded by the police

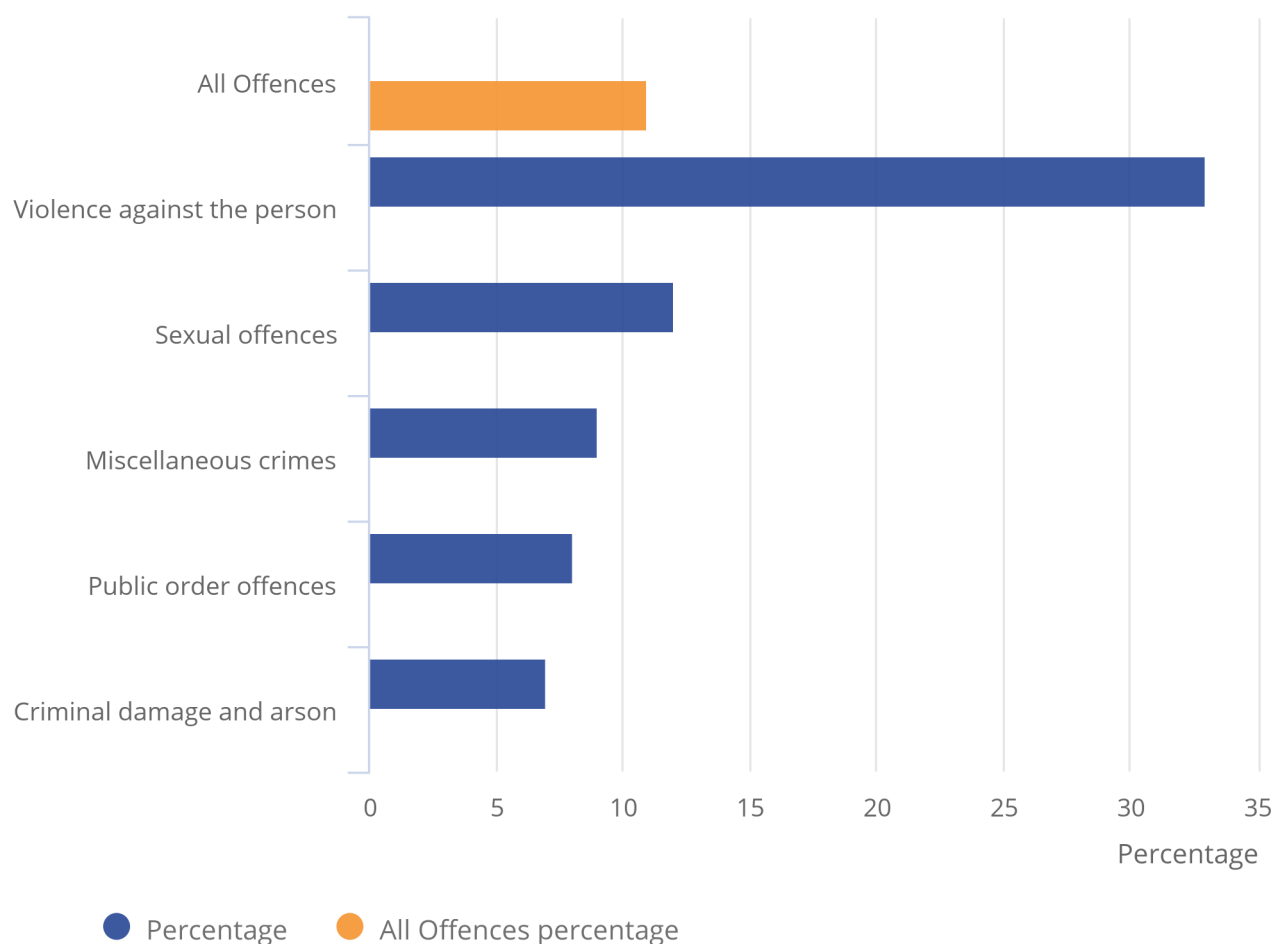
There were a total of 1,031,120 domestic abuse-related incidents and crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales in the year ending March 2016. Of these, 421,185 (41%) were recorded as crimes while the remaining 609,935 (59%) were incidents not subsequently recorded as a crime and remained as incidents ¹. These figures are not directly comparable with the estimates from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), which will include domestic abuse that was not reported to the police. Furthermore, CSEW estimates relate to the number of victims rather than the number of incidents.

Of the 421,185 domestic abuse-related offences, 327,565 offences (78% of the total) were for violence against the person offences, 37,503 (9%) were for criminal damage and arson, 16,632 (4%) were for public order offences, 13,120 (3%) were for sexual offences and the remaining 26,365 were for various other notifiable offences (data not shown).

Overall, 11% of all offences recorded by the police were flagged as domestic abuse-related. Violence against the person offences were the most likely to be domestic abuse-related comprising a third (33%) of all such offences (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3: Proportion of offences recorded by the police in England and Wales which were flagged as domestic abuse-related, selected offence groups, year ending March 2016

Figure 4.3: Proportion of offences recorded by the police in England and Wales which were flagged as domestic abuse-related, selected offence groups, year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.

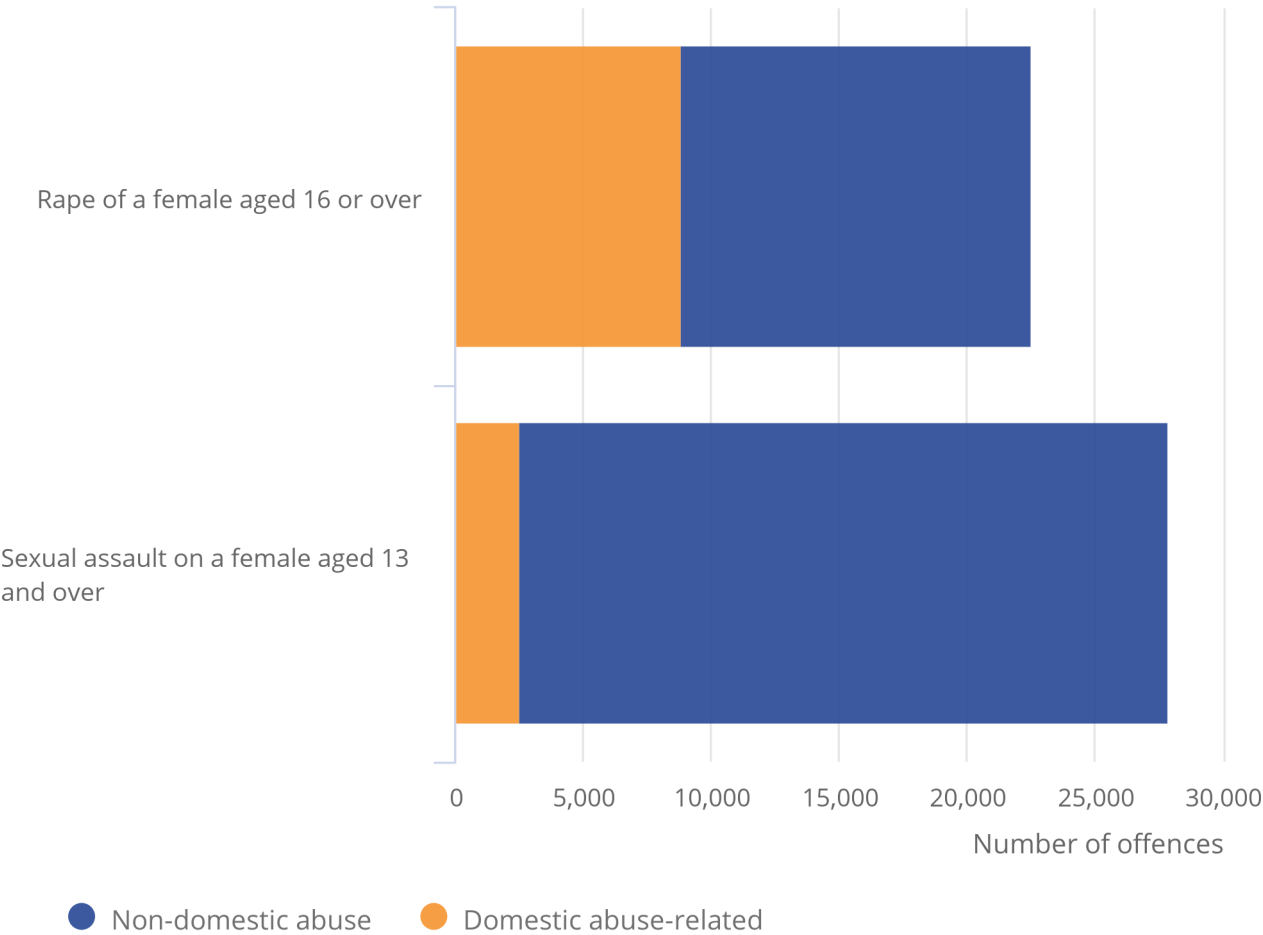
As stated previously, violence against the person offences were most likely to be domestic abuse-related. Three-quarters (75%) of violence against the person offences were for assault with and without injury; for both these offences a third were domestic abuse-related. Some of the lower volume offences within violence against the person were proportionality more likely to be domestic abuse-related: There were 8,173 offences of threats to kill that were domestic abuse-related (47% of the offences recorded); and 2,252 offences of domestic abuse related stalking (54%).

Sexual offences had the second-highest proportion of offences being domestic abuse related (after violence against the person), at 12%. The majority of victims of these sexual offences were female, with women and girls accounting for 90% of rape victims and 85% of other sexual offences.

For both rape and sexual assault, offences where the victim was female were more likely to be domestic abuse-related than where the victim was male. For example, 39% of rape of a female aged 16 or over offences were domestic abuse-related compared with 5% of rape of a male aged 16 or over offences (Figures 4.4a and 4.4b).

Figure 4.4a: Proportion and number of rape and sexual assault offences recorded by the police in England and Wales where the victim was female, and whether they were flagged as domestic abuse-related, year ending March 2016

Figure 4.4a: Proportion and number of rape and sexual assault offences recorded by the police in England and Wales where the victim was female, and whether they were flagged as domestic abuse-related, year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

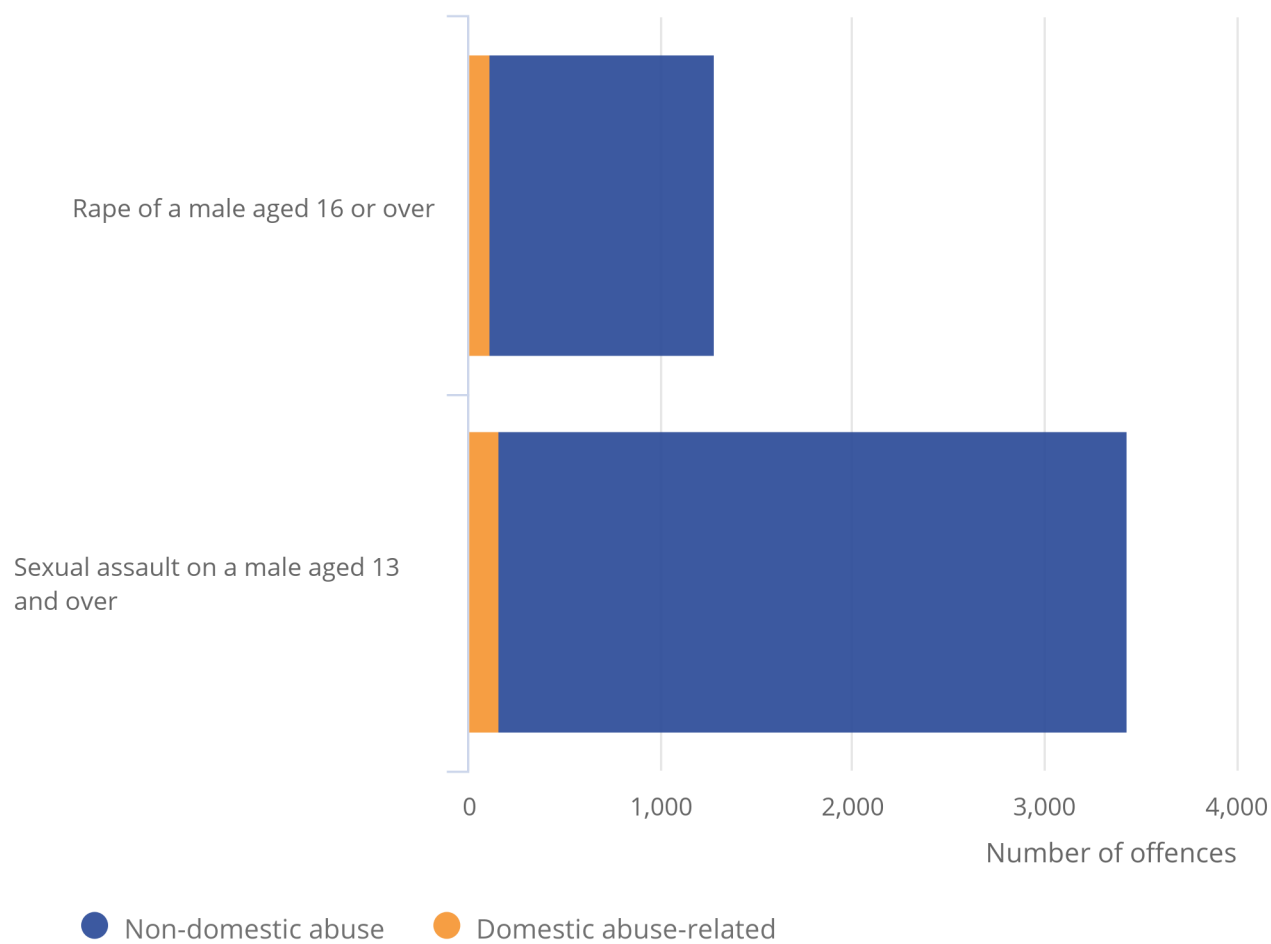
Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

- 1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics

Figure 4.4b: Proportion and number of rape and sexual assault offences recorded by the police in England and Wales where the victim was male, and whether they were flagged as domestic abuse-related, year ending March 2016

Figure 4.4b: Proportion and number of rape and sexual assault offences recorded by the police in England and Wales where the victim was male, and whether they were flagged as domestic abuse-related, year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

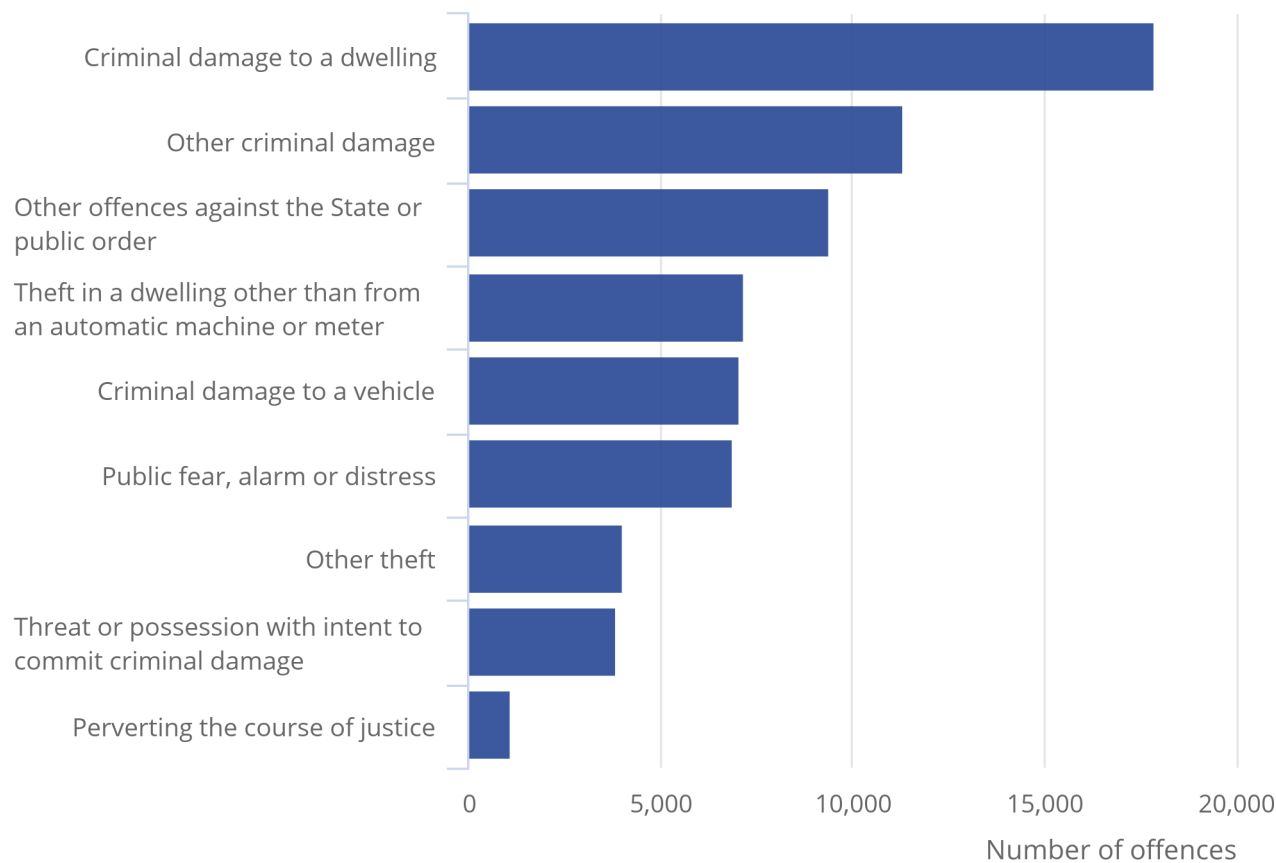
Notes:

- 1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.

Across other offence groups, there were a number of crime types that either had a relatively high volume, or a high proportion, of offences that were domestic abuse-related (Figure 4.5). For example, there were 17,882 criminal damage to a dwelling offences which were domestic abuse related, which accounts for 14% of all criminal damage to a dwelling offences. There were fewer threat or possession with intent to commit criminal damage offences that were domestic abuse-related (3,880), but these accounted for a higher proportion of all such offences (30%).

Figure 4.5: Number of offences recorded by the police in England and Wales which were flagged as domestic abuse-related, selected offences, year ending March 2016

Figure 4.5: Number of offences recorded by the police in England and Wales which were flagged as domestic abuse-related, selected offences, year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Source: Police recorded crime, Home Office

Notes:

- 1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.

Domestic related abuse offences by police force area

The proportion of violence against the person offences that were domestic abuse related is relatively similar between most police forces, with 42 of the 44 forces reporting between 25% and 40% ([Appendix Table 4.08a](#)).

Information is also provided on rates per population for domestic abuse offences. For England and Wales, there were 7 domestic abuse-related offences per 1,000 population recorded by the police in the year ending March 2016. Information on the rates for each police force can be found in [Appendix Table 4.08b](#).

Further information on police recorded domestic abuse from the Home Office Data Hub

Violent and sexual offences flagged as domestic abuse-related have been analysed alongside the age and sex of victims. There were 11 forces² that supplied data of sufficient quality for these variables and are therefore included in the analysis in this section. These 11 forces account for 23% of domestic abuse crime recorded in England and Wales. The analysis may not be representative of all forces in England and Wales, however, for these 11 forces, the proportion of violence against the person offences that were flagged as domestic abuse related was 33%, the same as for all forces.

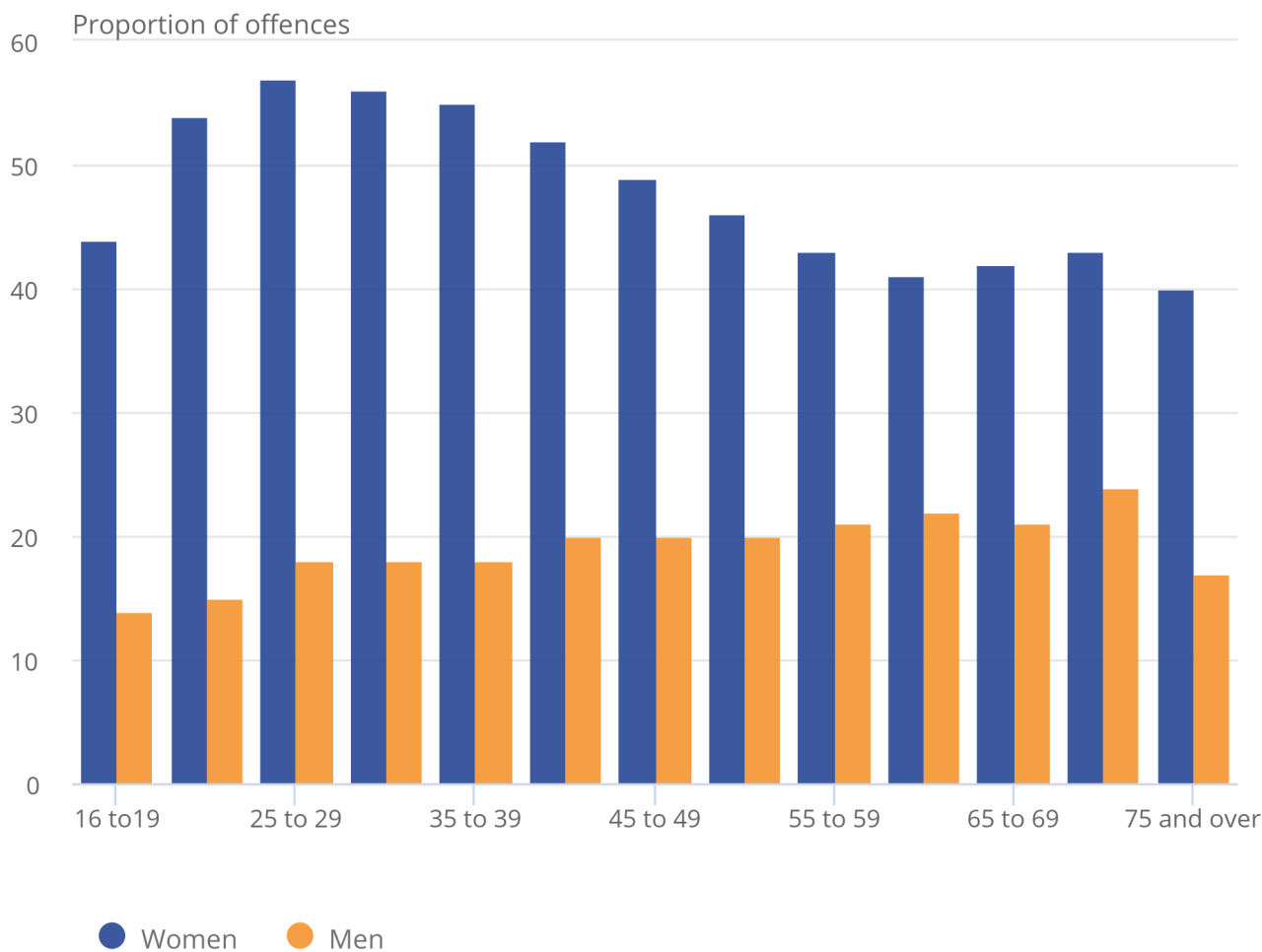
For these 11 forces, just over a half (52%) of violence against the person offences where the victim was a woman were flagged as domestic abuse-related compared with 18% of offences where the victim was a man (data not shown). This is in line with findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales self-completion module, where women were more likely to be victims of domestic abuse than men.

For women, as the age of the victim increases, the proportion of offences that were domestic abuse related tends to decline. For female victims aged 25 to 29, 57% of all police recorded violence was domestic abuse-related, compared with 40% for those aged 75 and older (Figure 4.6). It is important to note that the actual number of offences for both domestic abuse and non-domestic abuse decreases by age.

In contrast, for male victims the proportion of violent offences that were domestic abuse-related tends to increase with age, from 14% for 16 to 19 year old men to 24% for those aged 70 to 74 years old. This is partly due to the large decline in non domestic abuse-related violence by age for males, which declines at a faster rate than domestic abuse-related violence.

Figure 4.6: Proportion of violence against the person offences recorded by the police in England and Wales which were flagged as domestic abuse-related, by age and sex of victims, year ending March 2016 (11 forces)

Figure 4.6: Proportion of violence against the person offences recorded by the police in England and Wales which were flagged as domestic abuse-related, by age and sex of victims, year ending March 2016 (11 forces)



Source: Home Office Data Hub, Home Office

Source: Home Office Data Hub, Home Office

Notes:

- 1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
- 2. Data based on 11 forces that provided data of sufficient quality via the Home Office Data Hub

Notes for: Domestic abuse recorded by the police

1. Domestic abuse incident data for the year ending March 2016 are not comparable with previously published incident data due to changes in the coverage of the collection.
2. The 11 forces were: Cheshire, Cleveland, Gloucestershire, Greater Manchester, Hertfordshire, Lancashire, Merseyside, Norfolk, South Wales, Staffordshire and Surrey.

5 . What is happening to trends in intimate violence?

From April 2013, new questions were used for the intimate violence module in the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) survey. These were developed following research that identified the need for improvements to the wording of these sensitive questions, and their placement in the survey. Estimates calculated from the previous questions have been adjusted to make them as comparable as possible across the time series ¹ ([Appendix Table 4.04 and 4.05](#)).

For the definition of intimate violence and the four main categories that make up domestic abuse see Definitions in the Things you need to know section.

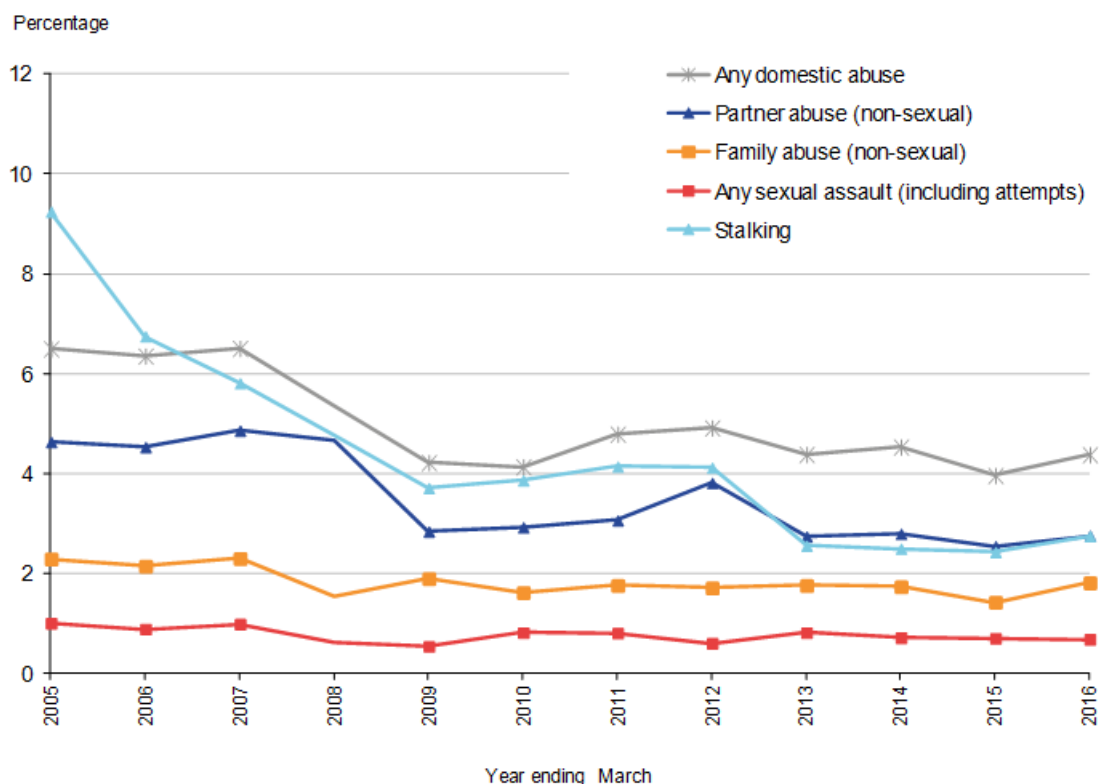
Trends in domestic abuse

For the period covering the years ending March 2005 to March 2007, the CSEW estimated that between 8.8% and 9.0% of adults aged 16 to 59 experienced some form of domestic abuse in the previous 12 months. The level decreased significantly to 6.5% in the year ending March 2009², since then there have been small changes in prevalence from year to year that were not statistically significant. However, the cumulative effect of these changes over a number of years has resulted in a significantly lower prevalence for the year ending March 2016 (6.1%) compared with the year ending March 2012 (7.0%), indicating a longer-term underlying downward trend.

The CSEW has shown an overall fall from around 2.7 million estimated victims of domestic abuse in the year ending March 2005 to 2.0 million victims for the year ending March 2016 ([Appendix Table 4.06](#)). The latest estimates for all headline categories of intimate violence in the last 12 months showed no statistically significant change compared with the previous year.

In the year ending March 2016, the CSEW estimated that 4.4% of men aged 16 to 59 had experienced some form of domestic abuse in the last 12 months, a significant decrease since the year ending March 2005 (Figure 4.7). Much of this fall was driven by a sharp fall for men in the prevalence of stalking between the years ending March 2007 (6.5%) and March 2009 (4.2%). The decrease in the prevalence of domestic abuse experienced by men in the last 12 months will also have been affected by the change in the questions related to stalking (See Trends in stalking below for more information).

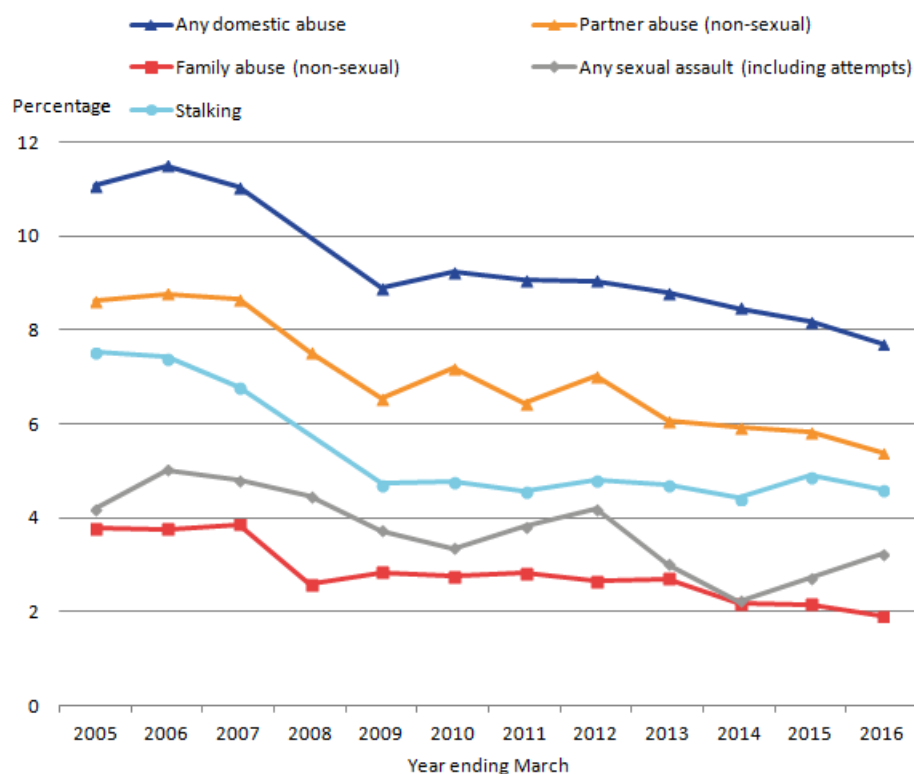
Figure 4.7: Percentage of men aged 16 to 59 who experienced intimate violence in the last year, by type of intimate violence, year ending March 2005 to year ending March 2016 , Crime Survey for England and Wales



In the year ending March 2016, an estimated 7.7% of women had experienced domestic abuse in the last 12 months (Figure 4.8). The latest estimates for women are the lowest figures recorded since the year ending March 2005 baseline. The difference between prevalence for men and women is also the lowest it has been since the year ending March 2005. The 3.3 percentage point difference between men and women in the year ending March 2016 compares with a peak difference of 5.1 percentage points in the year ending March 2010 and 4.6 percentage points in the year ending March 2005.

Over the last decade, changes in the prevalence of domestic abuse for women from year to year have been small and not statistically significant. However, since the year ending March 2005, the cumulative effect of these small changes has resulted in a significantly lower prevalence for the year ending March 2016 (7.7%) compared with the year ending March 2005 (11.1%).

Figure 4.8: Percentage of women aged 16 to 59 who experienced intimate violence in the last year, by type of intimate violence, year ending March 2005 to year ending March 2016, Crime Survey for England and Wales



Trends in sexual assault

In the year ending March 2016, the CSEW estimated that 2.0% of adults had experienced sexual assault (including attempts) in the last 12 months. Since the year ending March 2014 there have been small, but not statistically significant, increases year on year.

0.7% of men had experienced sexual assault (including attempts) in the last 12 months. The prevalence of sexual assault experienced by men in the last 12 months has remained at 0.7% since the year ending March 2014, and there has been no significant change since the year ending March 2005 (1.0%).

3.2% of women had experienced sexual assault (including attempts) in the last 12 months. The prevalence of sexual assault experienced by women in the last 12 months has not significantly changed compared with the year ending March 2015 (2.7%), and there has also been no significant change since the year ending March 2005 (4.2%).

Trends in stalking

Stalking has shown the largest decrease in prevalence of the different types of intimate violence, from 7.8% in the year ending March 2005 to 3.7% in the year ending March 2016. This fall has been more pronounced for men (9.2% to 2.7%) than for women (7.5% to 4.6%). Most of this change is related to stalking by someone other than a partner or family member (the prevalence of stalking by a partner and stalking by a family member has seen little change over the time series, [Appendix Table 4.05](#)) and occurred between the years ending March 2007 and March 2009. Since the year ending March 2009, stalking prevalence has fluctuated between 4.1% and 2.7% for men and between 4.9% and 4.6% for women ([Appendix Table 4.05](#)). However, when analysing trends in stalking, it is important to note that in the year ending March 2013, questions in the survey were changed to be in line with the legal definition of stalking.

Prior to the year ending March 2013, respondents were asked if they had experienced a number of different stalking behaviours. If respondents had experienced any of these behaviours at least once, they would have responded “yes” to the question and would have been counted as a victim of stalking in the CSEW estimates. However this was not consistent with the legal definition of stalking, which states these behaviours need to occur on more than one occasion to be classed as stalking. It is therefore likely that the CSEW over-estimated the prevalence of stalking prior to the year ending March 2013.

Notes for: What is happening to trends in intimate violence?

1. More information on the change to the questions and how the adjustment has been calculated can be found in the [methodological note: split sample for intimate personal violence](#).
2. These questions were not asked in the year ending March 2008 survey, so survey estimates for the year ending March 2009 are the next available

6 . Characteristics associated with being a victim of intimate violence

For the definition of intimate violence and the 4 main categories that make up domestic abuse see Definitions in the Things you need to know section.

Respondents are asked their characteristics at the time of their interview; this may differ to their characteristics at the time of the abuse.

In addition to women being more likely than men to have experienced intimate violence in the last 12 months, victimisation varied by other personal characteristics ([Appendix Tables 4.10 and 4.11](#)). Many of these characteristics will be closely associated (for example marital status and age) so caution is needed in the interpretation of the effects of these different characteristics when viewed in isolation.

Age

Among both men and women, the prevalence of intimate violence was highest amongst younger age groups. This is true for all domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking (Figure 4.9).

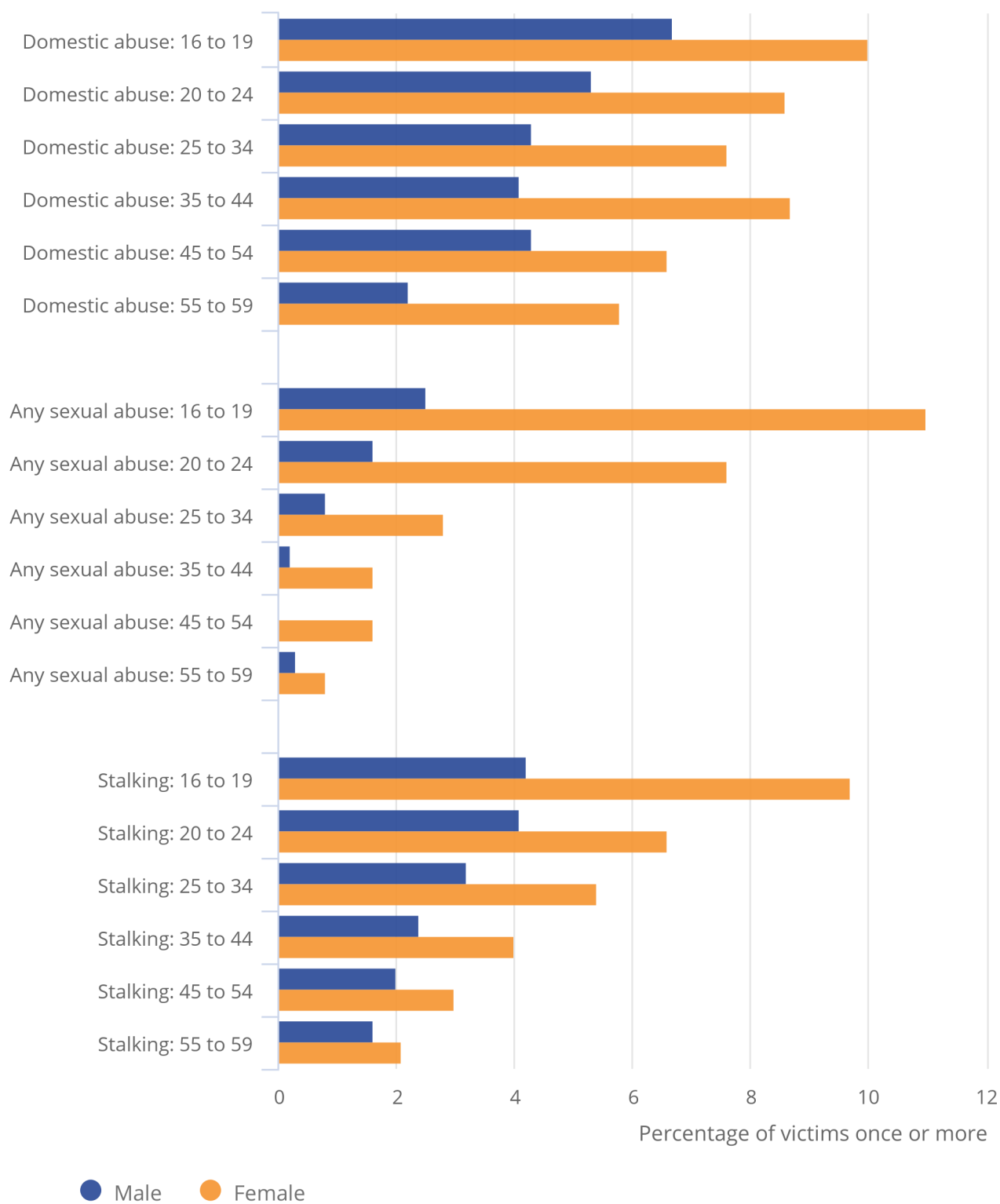
Women aged between 16 and 19 and between 20 and 24 were more likely to be victims of any domestic abuse (10.0% and 8.6% respectively) compared with those aged between 55 and 59 (5.8%). There was no statistically significant difference between other age groups. Similarly, younger men were also more likely to have experienced domestic abuse than older men. Those aged between 16 and 19 (6.7%) and between 20 and 24 (5.3%) were more likely than those aged between 55 and 59 (2.2%) to have experienced domestic abuse in the last year ([Appendix Table 4.10](#)).

In particular, young women aged 16 to 19 (11%) were much more likely to be victims of any sexual assault in the last 12 months than women aged 25 to 34 (2.8%), 35 to 44 (1.6%), 45 to 54 (1.6%) and 55 to 59 (0.8%). The only age group which was not significantly different when comparing with women aged 16 to 19 was women aged 20 to 24 (7.6%). The pattern was similar, but less pronounced for men.

Stalking showed a similar trend with women aged 16 to 19 (9.7%) and 20 to 24 (6.6%) more likely to be victims of stalking than women in older age groups. This was also the case for men aged 16 to 19 (4.2%) and 20 to 24 (4.1%), who were more likely to be a victim of this type of abuse than men in older age groups ([Appendix Table 4.10](#)).

Figure 4.9: Percentage of men and women aged 16 to 59 who were victims of intimate violence, in the last year by age and type of intimate violence, year ending March 2016 , Crime Survey for England and Wales

Figure 4.9: Percentage of men and women aged 16 to 59 who were victims of intimate violence, in the last year by age and type of intimate violence, year ending March 2016 , Crime Survey for England and Wales



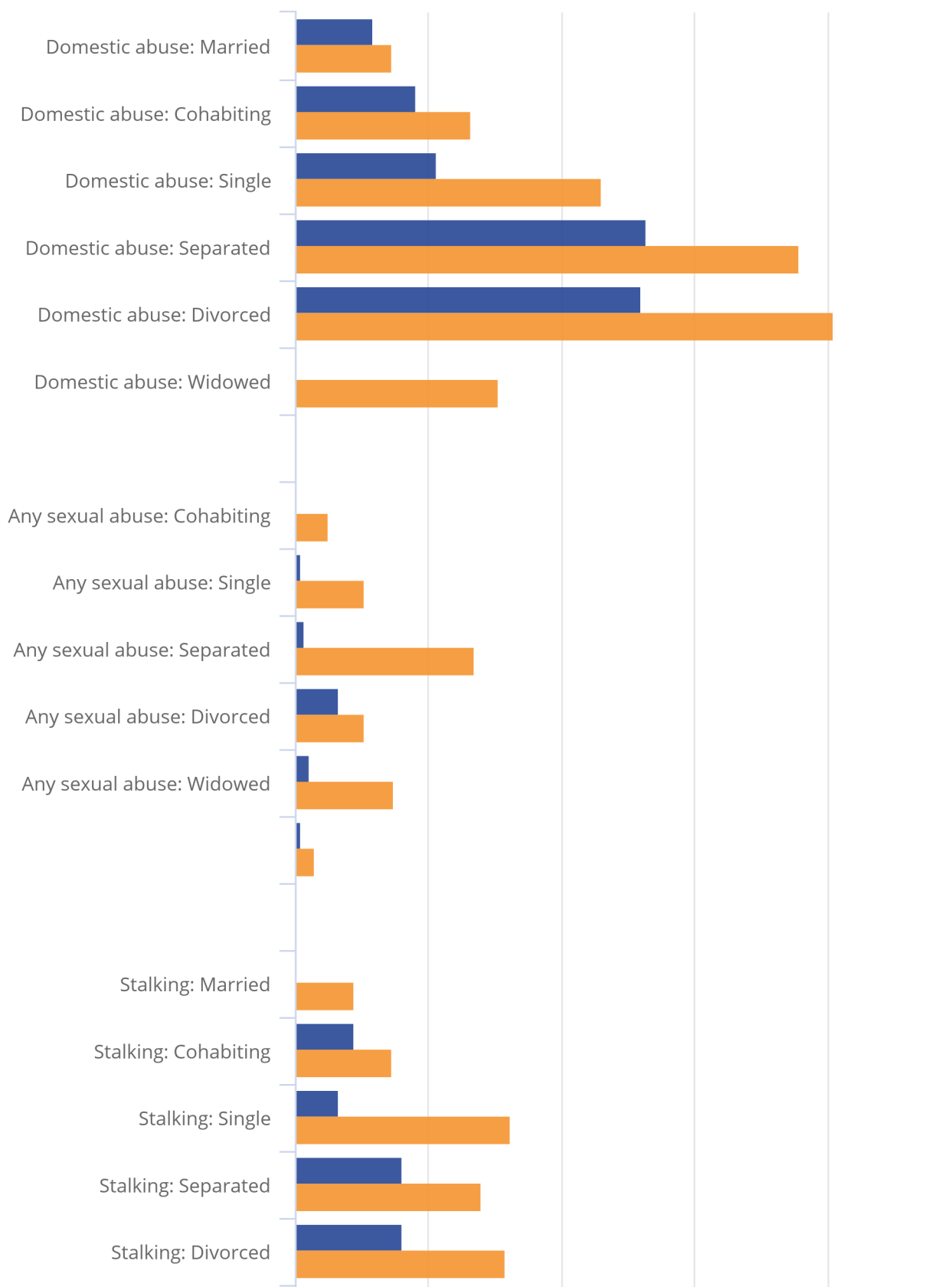
Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Marital status

- Adults who were separated and divorced were the most likely to be victims of any domestic abuse in the last 12 months. This is true for both men and women (Figure 4.10).
- Single women were more likely to be victims of sexual assault (6.7%), than those who were married or civil partnered (1.2%), cohabiting (2.6%) or divorced¹ (3.7%).
- Single women (8.1%) and women who were divorced (7.9%) were more likely to be victims of stalking than women who were cohabiting (3.6%) and women who were married or civil partnered (2.2%).
- Single and separated men were more likely to experience stalking (both 4%) than men with other marital statuses ([Appendix Table 4.10](#)).

Figure 4.10: Percentage of adults aged 16 to 59 who were victims of intimate violence in the last year, by marital status and sex, year ending March 2016, Crime Survey for England and Wales

Figure 4.10: Percentage of adults aged 16 to 59 who were victims of intimate violence in the last year, by marital status and sex, year ending March 2016, Crime Survey for England and Wales





Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Data for widowed men is unavailable as the unweighted base is less than 50.

Household structure

- Just under 1 in 4 women (23.4%) living in lone parent households were victims of domestic abuse in the last 12 months compared with 6.7% of those living in a household with no children and 6.3% of those living in a household with other adults and children.
- The pattern was similar for men, with an estimated 13.9% of men from lone parent households experiencing domestic abuse compared with 4.4% living in a household with no children and 4.1% living in a household with other adults and children.

Long-term illness or disability

- Those with a long-term illness or disability were more likely to be victims of any domestic abuse in the last 12 months than those without a long-term illness or disability. This was true for both men (7.3% compared with 3.9%) and women (15.7% compared with 6.2%).

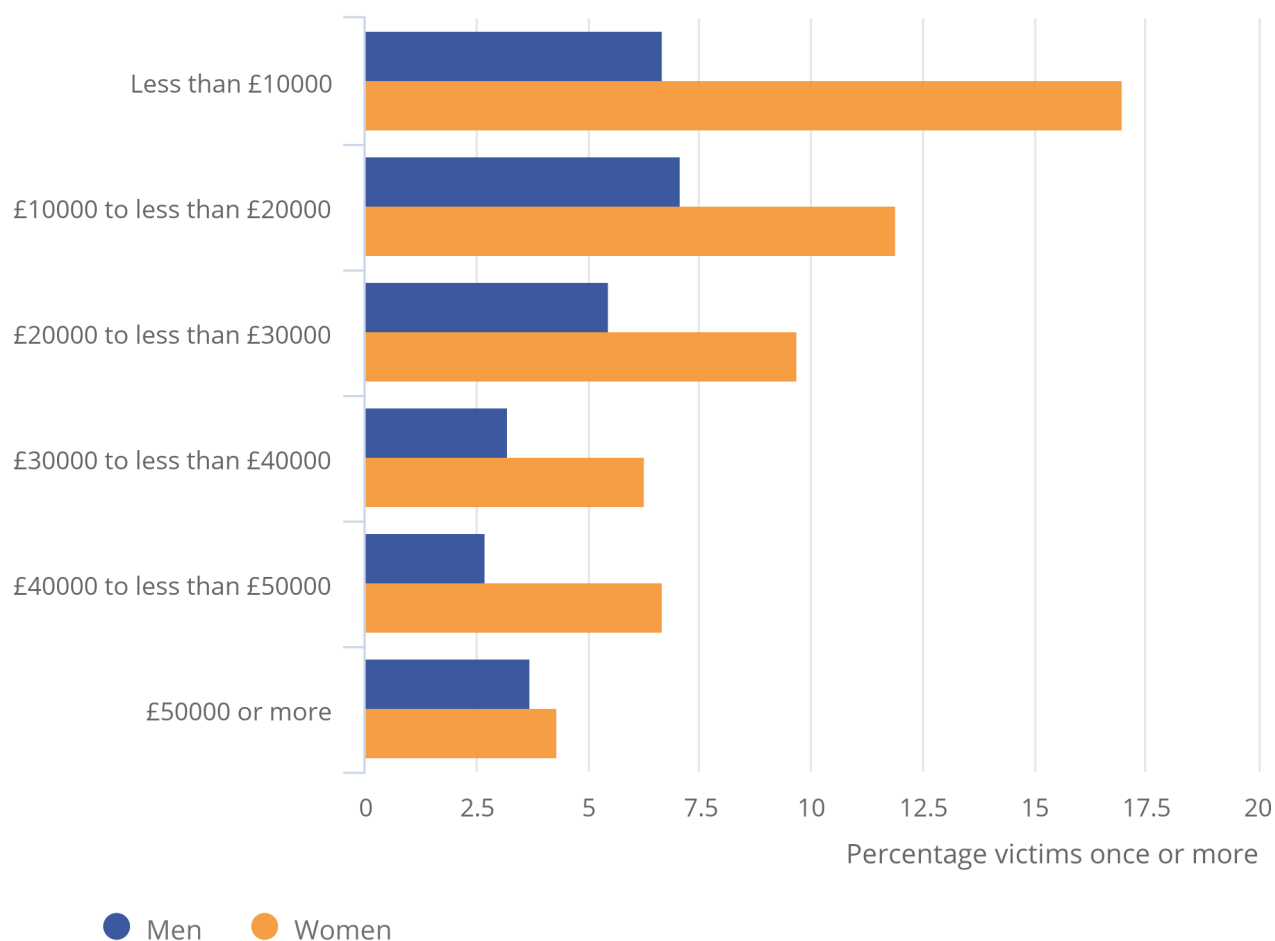
Household income

For women, the prevalence of domestic abuse in the last 12 months tends to decline as income increases (Figure 4.11). Nearly 4 times as many women in the lowest income bracket had experienced domestic abuse in the last 12 months (17.0%), compared with those in the highest household income bracket (4.3%) ([Appendix Table 4.11](#)).

This pattern is slightly different and less pronounced for men, with men in the £40,000 to £50,000 income bracket the least likely to have experienced domestic abuse in the last 12 months (2.7%) and men in the £10,000 to £20,000 income bracket the most likely (7.1%).

Figure 4.11: Percentage of adults aged 16 to 59 who were victims of domestic abuse in the last year by household income and sex, year ending March 2016, Crime Survey for England and Wales

Figure 4.11: Percentage of adults aged 16 to 59 who were victims of domestic abuse in the last year by household income and sex, year ending March 2016, Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes for: Characteristics associated with being a victim of intimate violence

1. This category includes those who have legally dissolved partnerships.

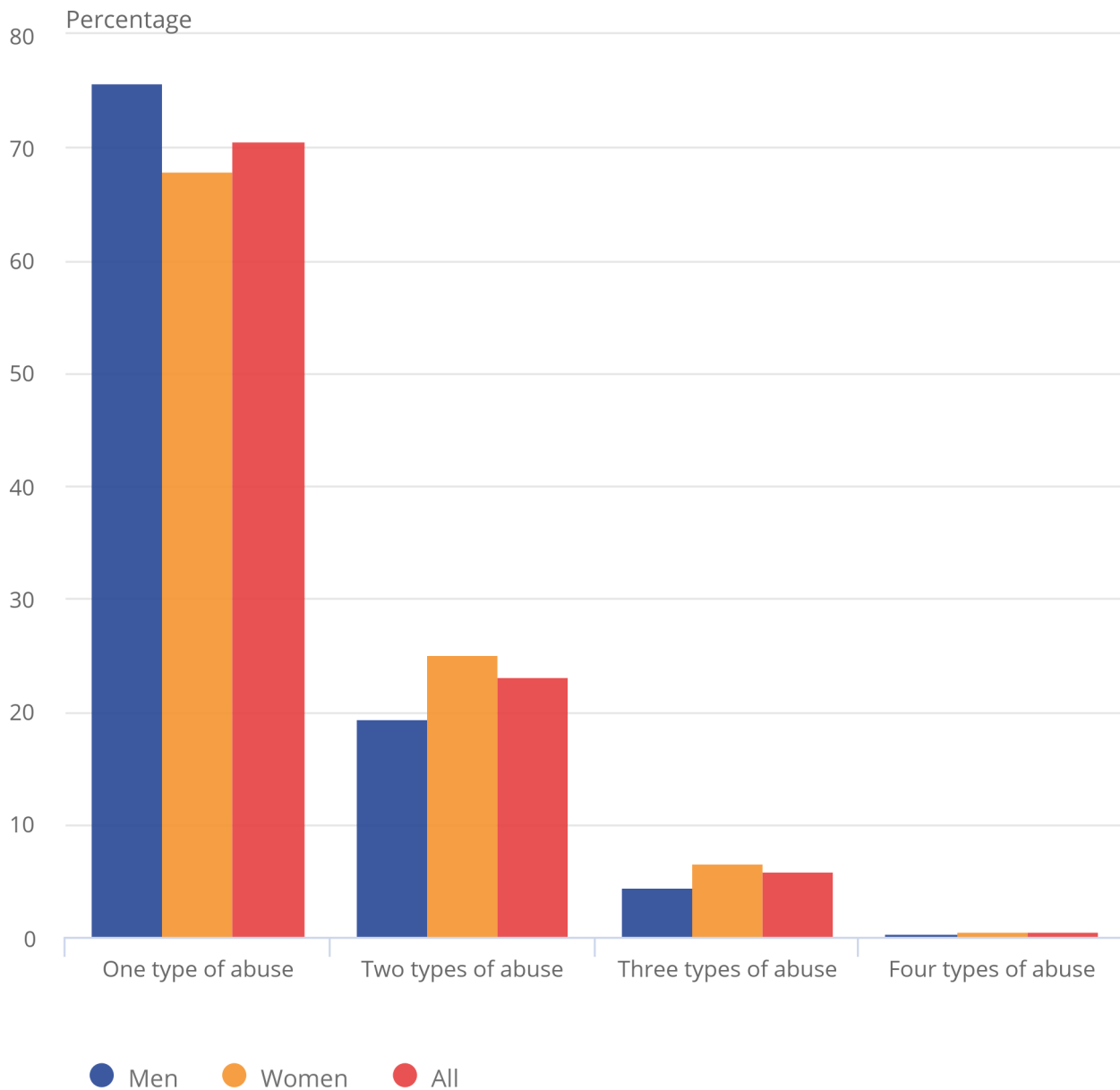
7 . How many types of abuse do victims suffer?

Analysis has been carried out showing the number of different types of abuse suffered by victims of domestic abuse in the last year ([Appendix Table 4.12](#)). Due to the relatively small number of victims of the different types of domestic abuse interviewed in any one year the analysis for this section has been completed on a dataset combining the 3 survey years ending March 2014 to March 2016.

The majority of domestic abuse victims (71%) suffered one type of abuse (Figure 4.12). Of those cases the most commonly experienced type of abuse was partner abuse, with 46% of all victims experiencing only this type of abuse in the last year¹ ([Appendix Table 4.12](#)).

Figure 4.12: Number of types of abuse experienced by victims of any domestic abuse, adults aged 16 to 59, year ending March 2014 to year ending March 2016, Crime Survey for England and Wales

Figure 4.12: Number of types of abuse experienced by victims of any domestic abuse, adults aged 16 to 59, year ending March 2014 to year ending March 2016, Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. This data is based on combined data from the year ending March 2014 to the year ending March 2016

Nearly 3 in 10 (29%) victims of domestic abuse suffered more than one type of abuse, with partner abuse and stalking the most commonly experienced combination (9.9% of victims of domestic abuse). Less than 1% of victims of domestic abuse suffered all 4 types of domestic abuse ([Appendix Table 4.12](#)).

Notes for: How many types of abuse do victims suffer?

1. For the 3-year data set "in the last year" refers to the 12 months prior to interview and covers a 4-year recall period from April 2012 to March 2016.

Compendium

Experimental statistics: Victims of police recorded violent and sexual offences

These analyses are based on a subset of forces that were able to supply detailed data of sufficient quality and are published as experimental statistics in advance of all forces being able to do so. They present data on violent and sexual offences recorded by the police in the year ending March 2016, broken down by age and sex of the victim. New data on the relationship between victims and suspects of these offences are provided for the first time. Information on the involvement of alcohol as a factor is also included.

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Release date:
9 February 2017

Next release:
To be announced

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1 . Main points

Based on a subset of police forces, in the year ending March 2016, these are the main findings.

Females were victims in 53% of violence against the person offences and 90% of rape offences recorded by the police.

Over a third (35%) of violence against the person offences against females were suspected to be committed by an intimate partner, compared with 10% of violent offences against males.

Young adults accounted for the highest proportion of victims of police recorded violence against the person offences, with 14% of victims aged 20 to 24. This declined with age, with less than 1% of violence against the person offences experienced by those aged 80 or over.

The majority of sexual offences recorded by the police (78%) involved a victim aged under 30.

Just under a third (30%) of rape offences against females were suspected to be committed by an intimate partner, compared with 5% of rape offences against males.

Of violence against the person offences recorded by the police, 16% were identified as alcohol-related, as were 9% of sexual offences.

2 . Things you need to know about this release

Police recorded crime figures provide information on the notifiable offences that have been reported to, and recorded by, the 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales, plus the British Transport Police. The police recorded crime collection has traditionally been based on the submission of aggregate returns from forces at the offence level. However, the Home Office has been working with forces to extract more detailed record level data from force crime recording systems, through the development of the Home Office Data Hub. This allows for a wider range of analyses to be carried out than previously. The Home Office are continuing to develop and implement this system across all 44 police forces in England and Wales.

Selected data on violent and sexual offences for the year ending March 2016 is provided from a subset of forces as [Experimental Statistics](#) in order to demonstrate to users some of the analyses possible in the future and to seek feedback to inform the future presentation of crime statistics. They are based on a subset of forces that were able to supply detailed data of sufficient quality and are published as Experimental Statistics in advance of all forces being able to do so:

- data for the age of victims are taken from 22 police forces that supplied data via the Data Hub ¹ ; these forces accounted for around 64% of violence against the person offences and 60% of sexual offences recorded in England and Wales in the year ending March 2016
- data on the sex of victims and newly published information on the relationship between victims and suspects are taken from 32 police forces; forces either provided the data via the Data Hub ² (9 forces) or in a separate manual collection³ when they were unable to provide via the Data Hub (23 forces) ⁴, these forces accounted for around 87% of violence against the person offences and 86% of sexual offences in England and Wales in the year ending March 2016

The Home Office started collecting information on the relationship of the victim to the suspect in April 2015 based on 3 categories:

- intimate – all partner and ex-partner relationships, not just where the couple were married or in a civil partnership, but also including co-habiting partners and those considered in a relationship
- other family relative – comprised family members other than partners, including those who are in-laws, adopted, step or half relatives
- other – includes other sexual relationships such as casual sexual partners and sexual clients, acquaintances, strangers and cases where the relationship status has not been identified or where there is no known suspect

Information on the involvement of alcohol as a factor in violent and sexual offences is also available from the Data Hub. As the law does not specifically define alcohol-related offences, the aggregate police recorded crime data collection does not separately identify this type of crime. However, the Data Hub contains a field where police forces can identify a given set of aggravating factors related to an offence and one of these factors is whether the offence was “alcohol-related”. It was not mandatory for forces to populate this field in the year ending March 2016, and there was not a standard definition used across police forces ⁵.

Analysis for alcohol-related violent and sexual offences is based on 30 forces providing data using the alcohol-related aggravating factor flag in the Data Hub, which is subject to continuing quality assurance ⁶. These forces accounted for around 81% of violence against the person offences and 79% of sexual offences in England and Wales in the year ending March 2016. The analysis includes data from the Metropolitan Police, who alone recorded 24% of violence against the person offences and 20% of sexual offences in England and Wales in this year.

It should be noted that the analysis may not be representative of all forces in England and Wales and data have not been reconciled with forces and are therefore subject to revision. The Home Office continue to work with police forces to ensure the consistency and comparability of the victim information they supply to the Home Office.

Notes for: Things you need to know about this release

1. Those forces that supplied data of a sufficient quality to the Data Hub – sufficient quality deemed to be when a high proportion of violent and sexual offences recorded by the police force included the necessary information such as date of birth, event start date and sex.
2. Where data is supplied via the Data Hub there could be more than one relationship per crime due to multiple suspects. Approximately 2% of violent offences and 2% of sexual offences recorded in the Data Hub have an unknown victim sex – these data have been excluded from this analysis.
3. Where data is supplied via the manual collection there is only 1 relationship per offence for the principal suspect.
4. 12 forces are excluded from the analysis due to issues with data collection or data quality.
5. A standard definition for “alcohol-related crime” has since been introduced in April 2016.
6. Quality assurance involves establishing which forces are using the “alcohol-related” flag on their offences and how usage compares across forces.

3 . Age and sex of victims of violent offences

The victim was female in 53% of violence against the person offences recorded by the police in the year ending March 2016 and male in 47% of offences. This is notably different from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) for the same period, which estimated that 60% of victims of violence were male, with 40% being female (data not shown).

A likely reason for the difference between the sources is that 52% of intimate violence offences against female victims were domestic abuse-related compared with 18% against men, and while the CSEW provides good estimates of most crime types, it is known that the main face-to-face survey underestimates the number of domestic violence incidents, as explained in Chapter 4, the 'Domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking' chapter of this release¹.

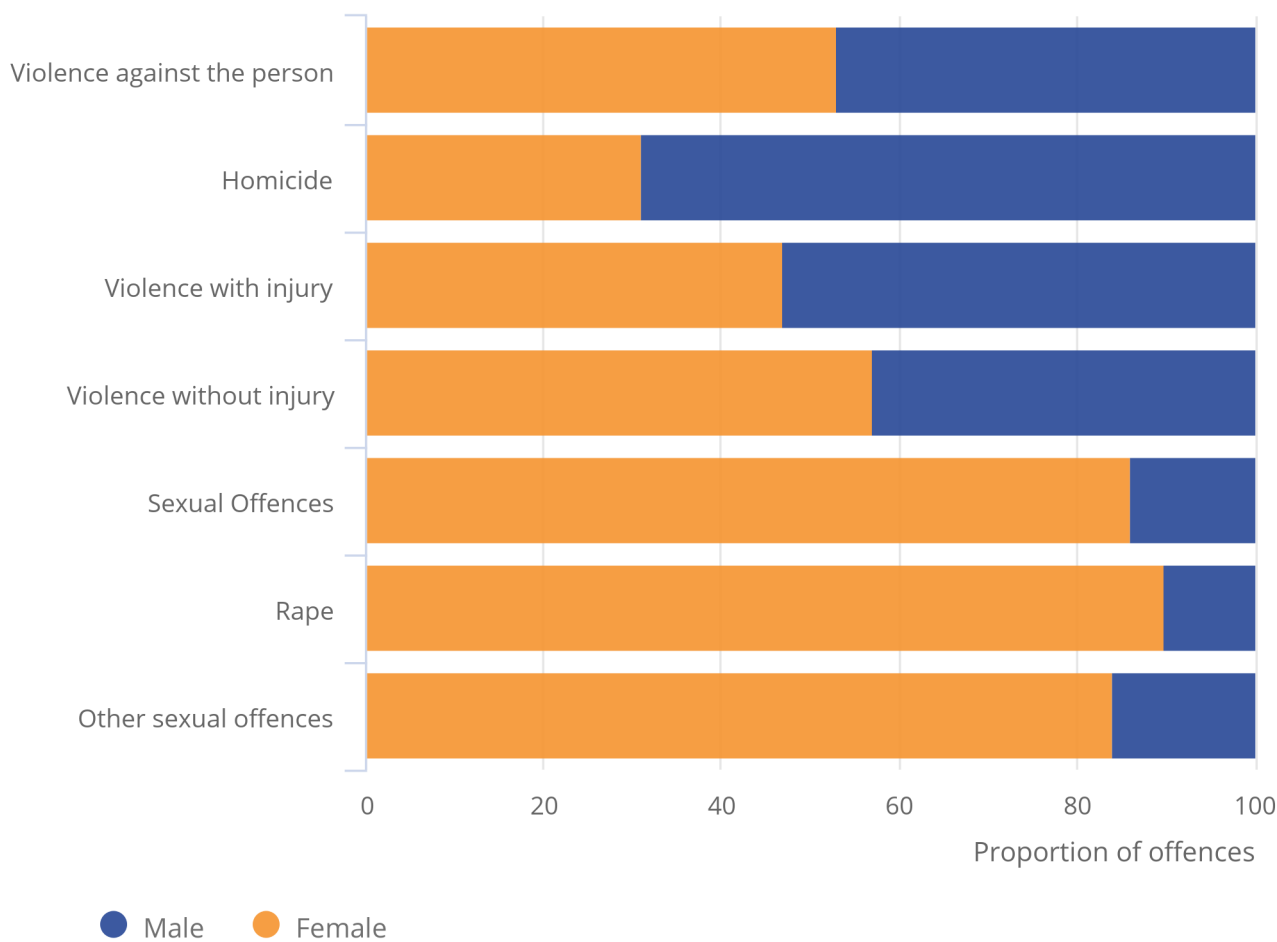
Analysis of reporting rates from the CSEW show that this may not be a large factor in the difference between sources. In the year ending March 2016, similar proportions of male and female victims of violence stated that they had reported the incidents to the police (49% and 56% respectively).

Violence against the person offences can be separated into those offences that resulted in an injury and those where no injury was suffered by the victim (Figure 5.1). Females accounted for a larger proportion of victims of police recorded violence without injury than males (57% compared with 43%), whereas males accounted for a larger proportion of victims of violence with injury (53% compared with 47%).

Figures for homicide by sex of the victim are also shown in Figure 5.1. These figures are taken from the Home Office Homicide Index and refer to all territorial police forces in England and Wales as well as the British Transport Police. In the year ending March 2016, 69% of homicide victims were male and 31% were female. More information on homicide offences can be found in Chapter 2, the 'Homicide chapter' of this release.

Figure 5.1: Proportion of violence against the person and sexual offences, by sex of victim, police recorded crime (32 forces) and Homicide Index (all forces), year ending March 2016

Figure 5.1: Proportion of violence against the person and sexual offences, by sex of victim, police recorded crime (32 forces) and Homicide Index (all forces), year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime and Homicide Index, Home Office

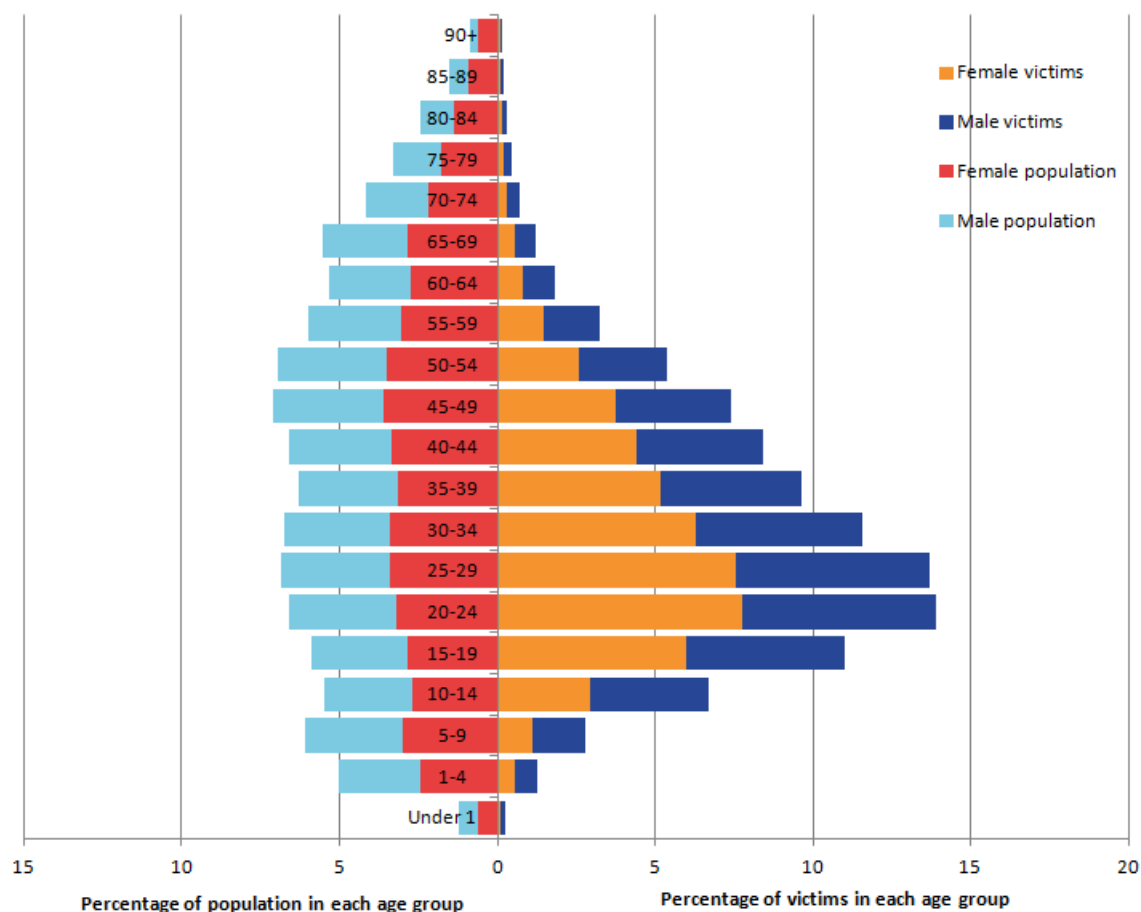
Source: Police recorded crime and Homicide Index, Home Office

Notes:

- 1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics. In accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007, figures from the Homicide Index have been re-assessed against the Code of Practice for Official Statistics and found to meet the required standard for designation as National Statistics.
- 2. Police recorded crime data based on 32 forces that provided accurate data via the Home Office Data Hub or in manual return.
- 3. Figures for Homicide are for all police forces in England and Wales (including British Transport Police) and are taken from the Home Office Homicide Index.

Information is also available on the age of victims of police recorded crimes from forces who have supplied data via the Data Hub (22 forces). Younger adults were more likely to be victims of violent crimes recorded by the police in the year ending March 2016 (Figure 5.2). For example, while those aged 20 to 29 made up around 13% of the population², they were victims in 28% of violence against the person offences recorded by the police. Within this age group, 56% of victims were female and 44% were male (data not shown). Older people and the very young were less likely to be victims of violent crime. For example, those aged 80 or older were victims in less than 1% of violent offences but made up around 5% of the population. Those aged under 10 accounted for 12% of the population but only 4% of victims.

Figure 5.2: Proportion of violence against the person offences, by age and sex of victim, Home Office Data Hub (22 forces), year ending March 2016



Notes for: Age and sex of victims of violent offences

1. The prevalence of domestic abuse reported in the self-completion module is far higher than the prevalence of domestic violence reported in the face-to-face interview. This is due to the greater confidentiality provided by self-completion methods leading to increased reporting of sensitive issues.
2. Based on the ONS England and Wales population estimates.

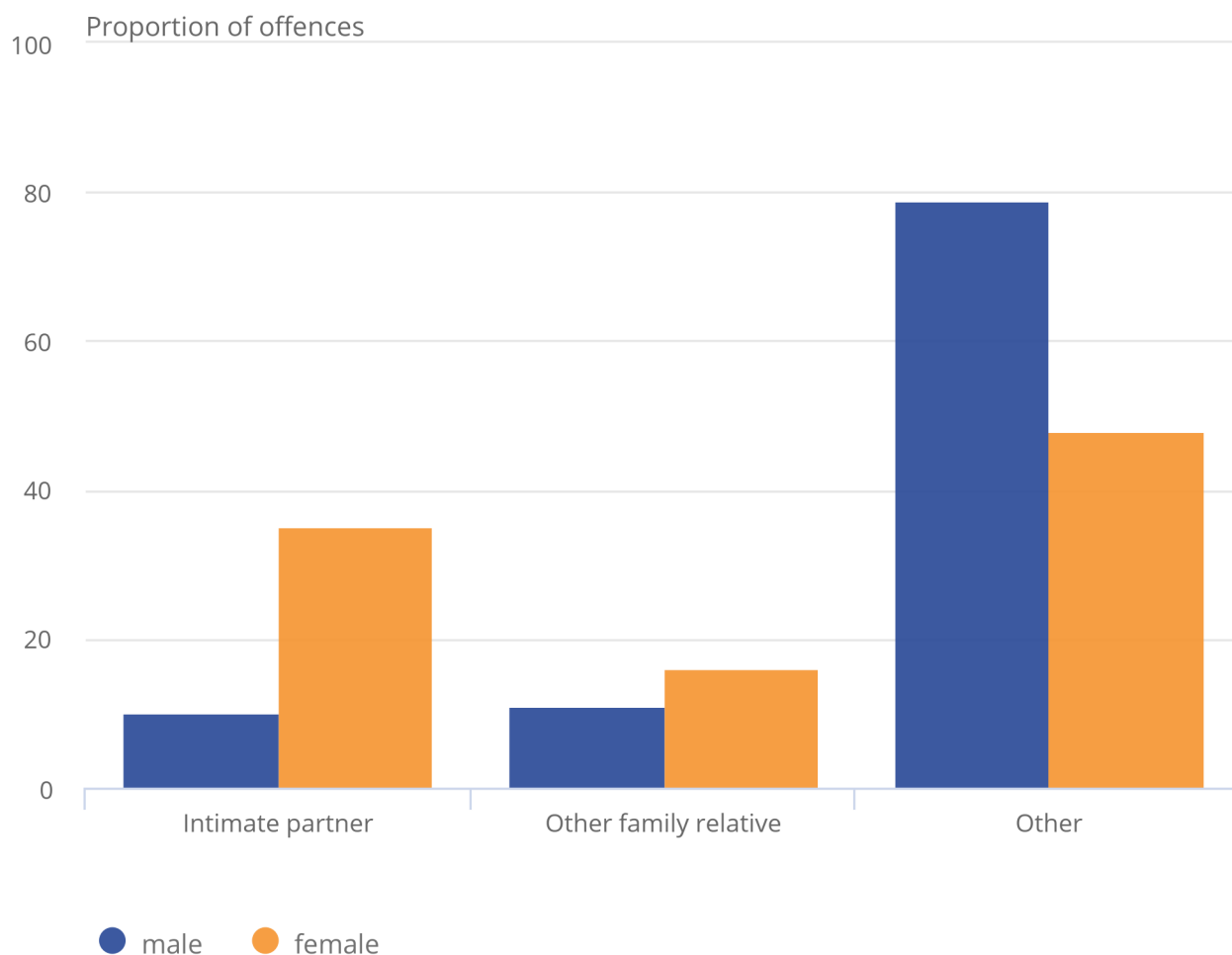
4 . How are victims and suspects of violent offences related?

Over a third (35%) of female victims of violence against the person offences in the year ending March 2016 were victims of crimes suspected¹ to be committed by an intimate partner, compared with 10% of male victims of violent offences (Figure 5.3). There was also a higher proportion of violence against the person offences against females where the suspect was another family member, than against males (16% compared with 11%). This is likely to be due to a higher proportion of females being victims of domestic abuse than males (52% compared with 18%, see section 3).

For a large proportion of violence against the person offences the suspect was neither a partner or ex-partner nor a relative ("other" relationships), particularly for offences against men (79% compared with 48% against women). Further analysis, using a subset of forces², identified that for relationships classified as "other" the victim and suspect were known acquaintances in 47% of offences, had an unknown relationship (mainly because a suspect had not been identified) in 42% of offences, and were strangers in 11% of offences ([Appendix Table 5.01](#)).

Figure 5.3: Proportion of violence against the person offences, by sex of the victim and relationship of victim to suspect, police recorded crime (32 forces), year ending March 2016

Figure 5.3: Proportion of violence against the person offences, by sex of the victim and relationship of victim to suspect, police recorded crime (32 forces), year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime

Source: Police recorded crime

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Police recorded crime data based on 32 forces that provided accurate data via the Home Office Data Hub or in a manual return.

Notes on:

1. The Home Office collects data on the relationship between the victim and the principal suspect. Until a principal suspect is convicted, they are referred to as suspects rather than offenders.
2. Based on 9 forces who provided detailed relationship data via the Data Hub at a disaggregated level.

5 . Age and sex of victims of sexual offences

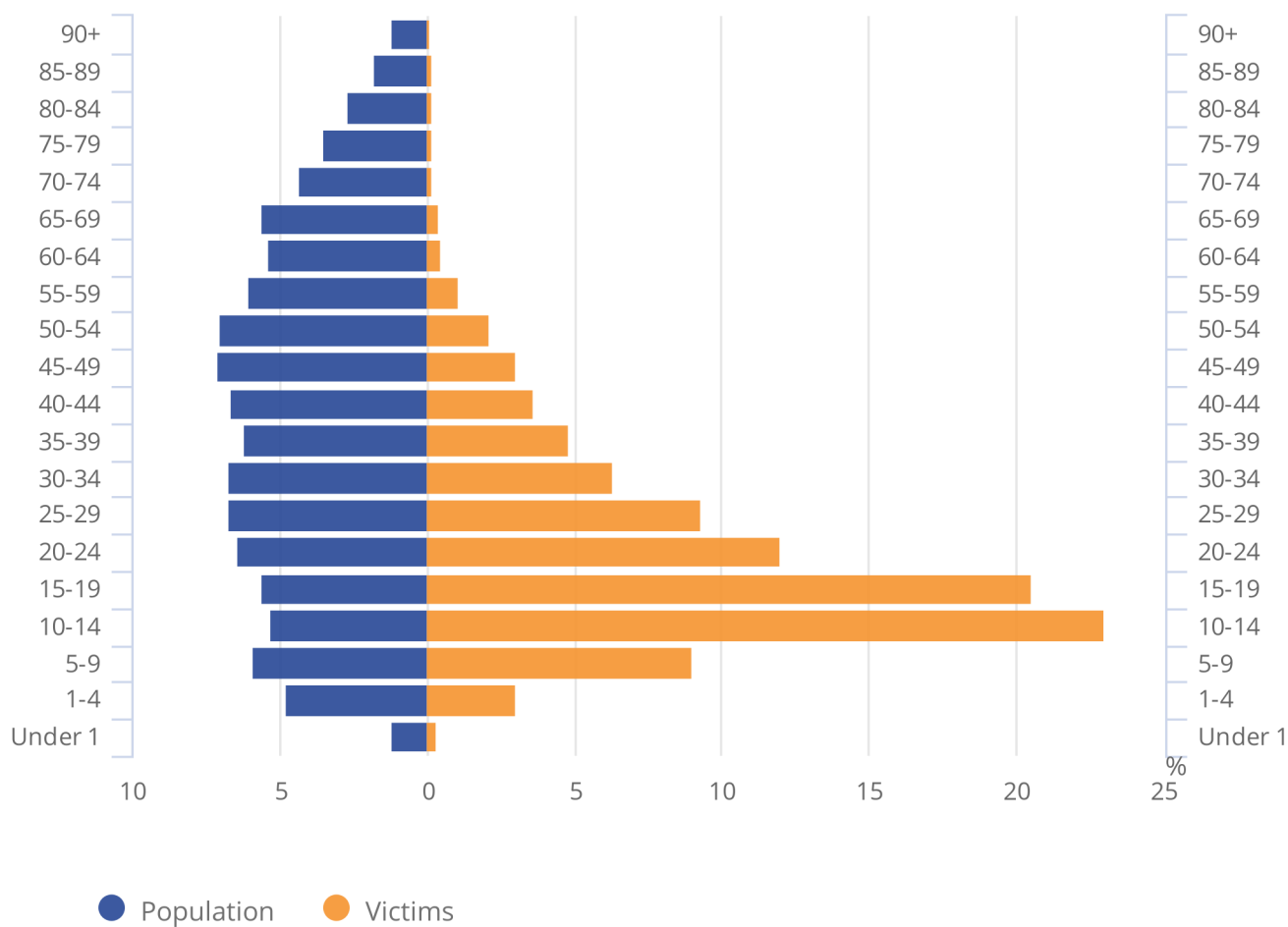
Police recorded sexual offences can be broken down into rape offences and other sexual offences (which includes offences such as sexual assaults, grooming, sexual exploitation). In the year ending March 2016, females were victims in 90% of rape offences, with the remaining 10% males¹ (Figure 5.1). Similarly, more victims of police recorded other sexual offences were female (84%) than male (16%).

The age profile of victims of sexual offences shows that victims are generally younger than those for violent offences. The majority of sexual offences recorded by the police (78%) involved a victim aged under 30, with just under half (49%) of victims being aged under 16 (data not shown).

Information from the Home Office Data Hub also shows that women aged 10 to 24 were disproportionately more likely to be victims of sexual offences recorded by the police, particularly those aged 10 to 14 and 15 to 19. For example, while 5% of the female population were aged 10 to 14, this age group accounted for 23% of police recorded sexual offences where the victim was female (Figure 5.4). Men aged 5 to 19 were also disproportionately more likely to be victims of sexual offences (Figure 5.5). For example, while 6% of the male population were aged 10 to 14, this age group accounted for 29% of police recorded sexual offences where the victim was male.

Figure 5.4: Distribution of female population and female victims of sexual offences, by age, Home Office Data Hub (22 forces), year ending March 2016

Figure 5.4: Distribution of female population and female victims of sexual offences, by age, Home Office Data Hub (22 forces), year ending March 2016



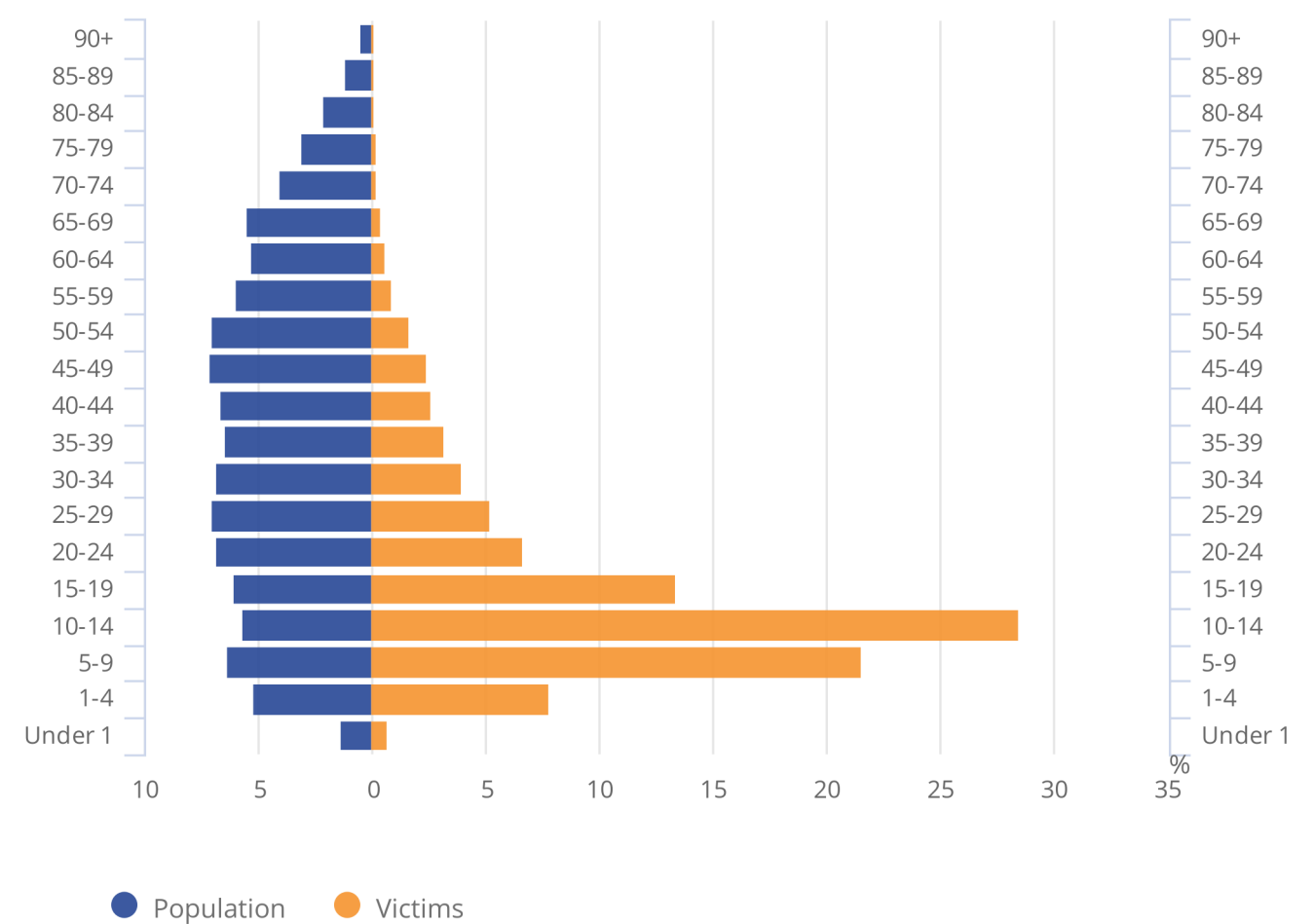
Source:

Notes:

- 1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
- 2. Police recorded crime data based on 22 forces that provided accurate data via the Home Office Data Hub.
- 3. Population figures are based on the ONS population estimate for England and Wales.

Figure 5.5: Distribution of male population and male victims of sexual offences, by age, Home Office Data Hub (22 forces), year ending March 2016

Figure 5.5: Distribution of male population and male victims of sexual offences, by age, Home Office Data Hub (22 forces), year ending March 2016



Source: Home Office Data Hub

Source: Home Office Data Hub

Notes:

- 1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
- 2. Police recorded crime data based on 22 forces that provided accurate data via the Home Office Data Hub.
- 3. Population figures are based on the ONS population estimate for England and Wales.

Notes for: Age and sex of victims of sexual offences

- 1. Based upon [Table A4](#) in Crime in England and Wales, Year ending September 2016.

6 . How are victims and suspects of sexual offences related?

Analysis of the relationship between victims and suspects of sexual offences is provided here for the first time, representing data from 32 forces for the year ending March 2016.

Just under a third (30%) of rape offences against females were (suspected to be) committed by an intimate partner, compared with 5% of rape offences against males (Figure 5.6). This is notably different from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), which showed that almost half (47%) of serious sexual assaults against females were committed by a partner or ex-partner ([Appendix Table 4.13](#), Focus on violent crime and sexual offences, year ending March 2014)¹. This may be because rapes within a relationship are less likely to be reported to the police than rapes committed by strangers. For other sexual offences, the proportion of offences committed by an intimate partner where the victim was female was considerably lower than for rape offences (8% compared with 30% for rape) but similar for where the victim was male (3% compared with 5% for rape).

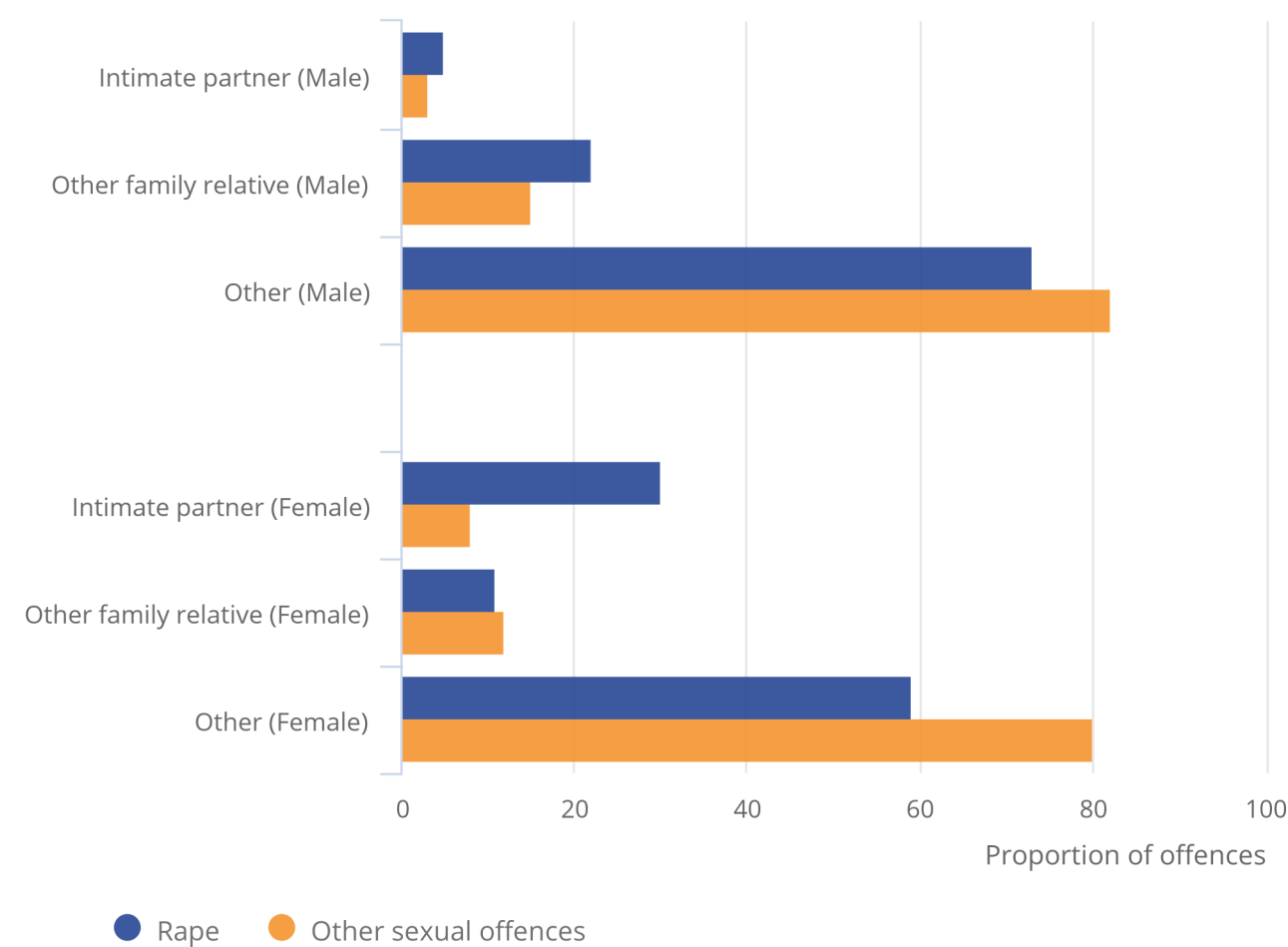
Rape by a family member accounted for a higher proportion of rape offences against males than against females (22% compared with 11%). For other sexual offences, the proportion of offences committed by a family member is similar for both male and female victims (15% and 12% respectively).

In the year ending March 2016, the majority of relationships between the victim and the suspect for rape offences were classed as “other”, particularly for male victims (73% compared with 59% for female victims). This category comprises other sexual relationships such as casual sexual partners, acquaintances, strangers and cases where the relationship status has not been identified or is unknown. Further analysis, using a subset of forces ² ([Appendix Table 5.01](#)), identified that for relationships classified as “other”, 46% were where the victim and suspect were known acquaintances, 14% were where the suspect was a stranger, and 40% were where the relationship between the victim and suspect was unknown (mainly because a suspect had not been identified).

The majority of relationships between the victim and the suspect for other sexual offences were also classed as “other” (82% for male victims and 80% for female victims). Further analysis, using a subset of forces ³, identified that for these relationships, 43% were where the victim and suspect were known acquaintances, 22% were where the suspect was a stranger and 35% were where the relationship between the victim and suspect was unknown ([Appendix Table 5.01](#)).

Figure 5.6: Proportion of rape and other sexual offences, by sex of victim and relationship of victim to suspect, police recorded crime (32 forces), year ending March 2016

Figure 5.6: Proportion of rape and other sexual offences, by sex of victim and relationship of victim to suspect, police recorded crime (32 forces), year ending March 2016



Source: Police recorded crime

Source: Police recorded crime

Notes:

- 1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
- 2. Police recorded crime data based on 32 forces that provided accurate data via the Home Office Data Hub or in a manual return.

Notes for: How are victims and suspects of sexual offences related?

1. Data for the year ending March 2014 is the most up-to-date available as questions on the nature of sexual assault are not asked in the CSEW every year.
2. Based on 9 forces who provided detailed relationship data via the Data Hub at a disaggregated level.
3. Based on 9 forces who provided detailed relationship data via the Data Hub at a disaggregated level.

7 . Alcohol-related violent and sexual offences

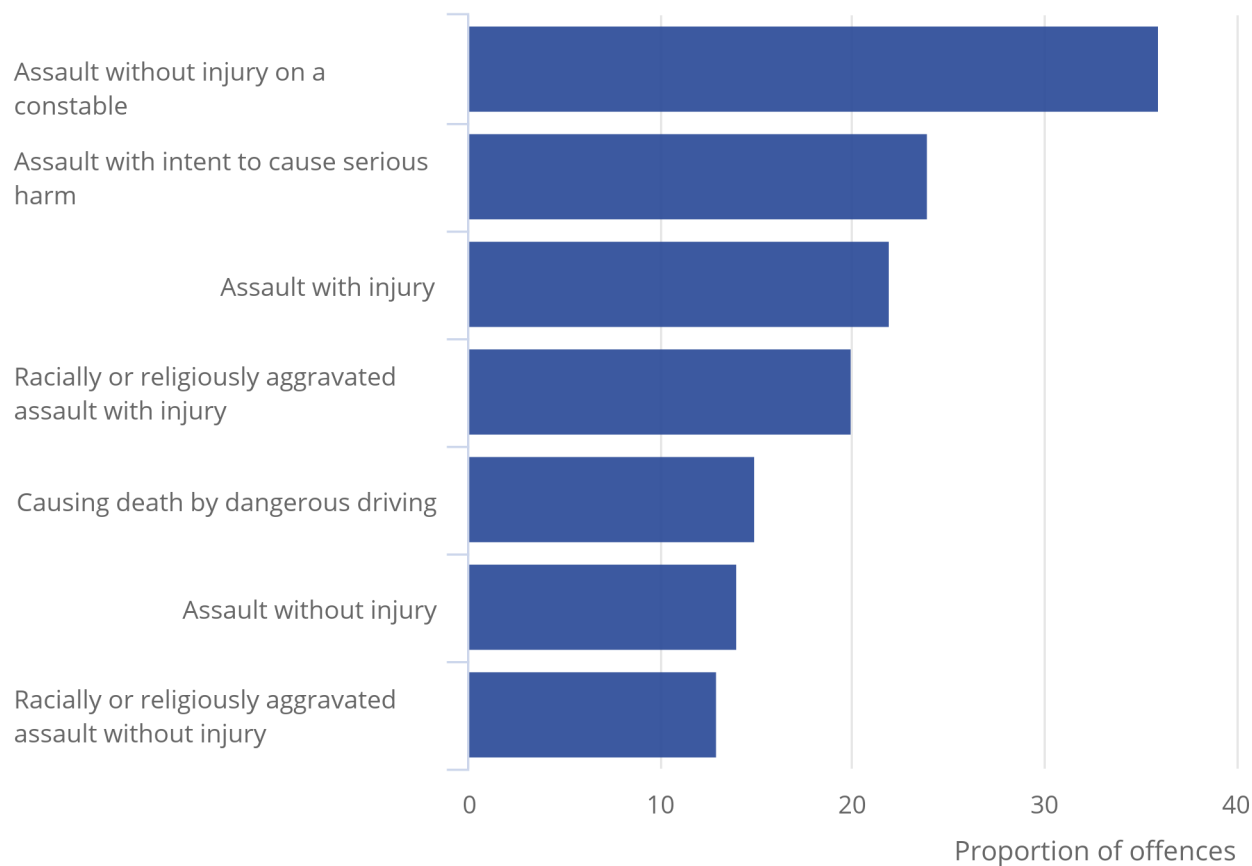
In the year ending March 2016, 16% of violence against the person offences were flagged by the police as alcohol-related. The corresponding figure (as published last year¹) for the year ending March 2015 was 19%, however, the 2 years are not directly comparable as a different set of police forces were used in each year.

The proportion of alcohol-related violent offences recorded by the police in the year ending March 2016 is considerably lower than equivalent data derived from the CSEW. It should be noted that there are differences in the definitions. The CSEW defines crimes as “alcohol-related” if the victim perceived the offender(s) to be under the influence of alcohol. However, in the year ending March 2016, there was no standard definition for police recorded alcohol-related crime, and police forces were applying different definitions based on local needs and issues. The alcohol-related flag was not mandatory in this year.

The offence of “assault without injury on a constable” had the highest proportion of offences that were alcohol-related (36%), although it only accounted for 1% of violent offences. “Assault with injury” (22% of which were flagged as alcohol-related) and “assault without injury” (14%) were more common offences and respectively accounted for 40% and 35% of all police recorded violence. Violent offences most likely to be flagged as alcohol-related are shown in Figure 5.7^{2 3}.

Figure 5.7: Proportion of selected violence against the person offences recorded by the police which were ‘alcohol-related’, Home Office Data Hub (30 forces), year ending March 2016

Figure 5.7: Proportion of selected violence against the person offences recorded by the police which were ‘alcohol-related’, Home Office Data Hub (30 forces), year ending March 2016



Source: Home Office Data Hub

Source: Home Office Data Hub

Notes:

1. Police recorded crime data are not designated as National Statistics.
2. Police recorded crime data based on 30 forces that provided accurate data via the Home Office Data Hub.
3. There are some violent offences with a high proportion of alcohol-related offences which have been excluded from this analysis due to very low volumes.
4. Selected violence against the person offences were those offences with the highest proportion of the alcohol-related flag.
5. Note that recording an alcohol-related factor for crimes was optional for forces in this year and a standard definition for usage was not introduced until April 2016. As such, we advise caution when interpreting these figures.

In the year ending March 2016, 9% of sexual offences were flagged as alcohol-related. This is similar to the 10% in the year ending March 2015 (as published last year⁴), however, the 2 years are not directly comparable as a different set of police forces were used in each year.

A higher proportion of rape offences (13%) were flagged as alcohol-related than other sexual offences (7%) in the year ending March 2016. The sexual offences most likely to be alcohol-related were "Rape of female victims aged 16 or over" (17%) and "Rape of male victims aged 16 or over" (14%).

The Home Office Data Hub can also capture the day and time when an offence took place. Previous analysis of these data for the year ending March 2015⁵ showed that a greater number of police recorded alcohol-related violent offences took place in the evening, especially on Fridays and Saturdays, compared with non alcohol-related violence, which occurred more uniformly throughout the day and week.

Notes for: Alcohol-related violent and sexual offences

1. Figures for the year ending March 2015 have been revised since they were published in [Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences: Year ending March 2015](#).
2. There are some violent offences with a high proportion of alcohol-related offences which have been excluded from this analysis due to very low volumes.
3. Selected violence against the person offences were those offences with the highest proportion of the alcohol-related flag.
4. Figures for the year ending March 2015 have been revised since they were published in ' [Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences: Year ending March 2015](#)'.
5. See Figure 5.7 in [Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences: Year ending March 2015](#).